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Percy & Harriet Currie

The Golf of Lady Grace

22d December 1892

LETTERS

FROM

MRS. PALMERSTONE

TO

HER DAUGHTER;

INCULCATING

MORALITY

BY

ENTERTAINING NARRATIVES.

BY MRS. HUNTER,
OF NORWICH.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

SECOND EDITION.

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DEDICATION.

To ELIZABETH HUTCHINSON, *the child of her affection, does the Author particularly dedicate the following pages; which, for the most part, were originally written with the view of contributing to render her what she is,—a good wife and a good mother:—fervently wishing that the work may be useful in forming the minds of her children, and that she may long live to reap the fruit of her maternal cares.*

" And see her virtues, with reflected grace,
" Bloom to fresh life, and charm another race."

RACHEL HUNTER.

Norwich,
June 1, 1803.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE writer of this little work, now presented to an indulgent and generous public, wishes to have it understood that the author of "Letitia, or The Castle without a Spectre," and of "The History of the Grubthorpe Family," had intended "Mrs. Palmerstone's Letters to her Daughter" for the introduction of her own name amongst those of the candidates for public notice and favour. This intention has been for several years frustrated by unavoidable and, to her, unforeseen obstacles. She consequently hazarded the publication of the two above-mentioned novels, without what she conceived to be the support which their simplicity and design required. Their success has however gratified her; for it has confirmed her in the persuasion, that a good inten-

tion, like charity, will cover a multitude of faults. Yet it is her *wish* that the reader of the subjoined work should keep in view that the novels already published, or which may appear from her pen, are purposely written for young women who resemble her Eliza Palmerstone, and for the approving eye of mothers like Mrs. Palmerstone. To such she pledges her word, not only for their sakes but for her own *interest*, before a tribunal more solemn than any in this world, to adhere to the poet's honest and laudable deprecation:

" Curst be the verse, how well soe'er it flow,
" That tends to make one worthy man my foe;
" Give Virtue scandal, Innocence a fear,
" Or from the soft-eyed virgin steal a tear!"

RACHEL HUNTER.

Norwich,
June 1, 1803.

A DIALOGUE

BETWEEN

THE AUTHOR

AND

HIS READER, MR. NOT-AT-ALL,

By way of Preface to the Author's Book.

AUTHOR. As I presume to bring this book for your perusal, it is expected, without doubt, that I should make an apology.

READER. Not-at-all. If your book be a good one, it needs no apology; and, if it be a bad one, your apology cannot make it better. Not all the prohibitions which may be enforced will prevent my reading it in the first instance; nor all your supplications induce me to throw away my time upon it in the second.

AUTHOR. I see, sir, unexpected visits are not within the sphere of your indulgence: you look upon this as an intrusion.

READER. Not-at-all: my doors are open to every body; I welcome all my visitors, and turn my back on none but pretenders.

AUTHOR,

AUTHOR. Give me leave to call upon you another time....Your honour..is..a little.. out of humour at present.

READER. Not-at-all. I am in the humour of saying what I think. If you call this ill humour, you will never find me in a good one.

AUTHOR. Well, well, I will drop my apology, and content myself with telling your honour how I, poor soul! who know nothing of authorship, and should shrink from the criticism of a school-boy, came to be of the number of your suitors: for, unqualified as I am, you wonder no doubt at my motive, and are impatient to know the particulars.

READER. Not-at-all. I know your motive as well as you do yourself; and to enter into a long detail of the matter would only give you some trouble, and myself no pleasure whatever.

AUTHOR. I intended entertaining your honour with some short instructive narratives of my composition; but, as I have already taken up too much of your time, you would be angry with me were I to detain you any longer. Would you not?

READER. Not-at-all. I love entertaining stories, especially short ones, as you say yours are. Begin therefore as soon as you please. But walk in,

in, and do not keep me any-longer at the door. I am very subject to catch cold.

AUTHOR. Before I begin my Narratives, I should tell your honour that they were intended for the service and instruction of youth; and as much has been written on this subject, you may perhaps think it is exhausted.

READER. Not-at-all. If any one had the good fortune of introducing into a book the whole of what should be and has not been said on this subject, I would pronounce it, without hesitation, one of the best books in the world.

AUTHOR. Say you so? I am glad your honour thinks as I do; and on the strength of this our agreement I will venture to send this book of mine into the world. Should it fail of success, and be left to the mercy of a certain species of rats, they will soon demolish it, as they have very little to nibble at besides the ill-fated productions of mistaken talents. I am however strongly tempted to give your honour a detail of those circumstances which first led me to my present design, and broke in upon habitual indolence and natural timidity. But perhaps I shall weary you?

READER. Not-at-all. I have, in common with my

my neighbours, some curiosity, and no objection to its gratification. Begin therefore.

AUTHOR. Some months since I was gratified by the unexpected visit of a friend, from whom time and distressing events had separated me for several years. But neither absence, nor those circumstances which I feared had involved his fortune and happiness in the ruin of thousands, could remove entirely from my mind the hope, that in his integrity, his talents, and his industry, he had found a refuge against misery. It had been the employment of his rational life to instruct youth in those lessons of wisdom and prudence which he undeviatingly exemplified in his own conduct. And with the most lively satisfaction I found, on our meeting, that those hopes which I had cherished, during my painful uncertainty respecting his actual condition, were realized. From the post of private preceptor, he was become, in this country, a public teacher in the various branches of polite and useful literature; and, with honour and increasing esteem, enjoyed in competence and ease the recompense of his assiduity and zeal in his professional duties, and important cares of instruction, of precept, and example, to the untutored

untutored and innocent. In our conversations on his favourite topic, *Education*, he complained of a difficulty I was no ways prepared to expect. He said he wanted books for his female pupils, and particularly for those between twelve and seventeen years of age. I instantly reminded him of the numberless and excellent works published for the express purposes of instruction to young people; and with some asperity, I believe, and perhaps national pride, named several authors who had a distinguished claim to his selection and preference. He replied, "He was well acquainted with the books which I had enumerated: he acknowledged their merit, and had availed himself of their usefulness. But," added he, smiling, "some are too serious, and others too childish: some say *too much*, and others *not enough*. I want a delineation of the human heart, with a moral which will not disgrace a mature reason. I want a mirror of truth and of nature, in which my girls may see themselves without danger to their native simplicity, and without checking too harshly their natural curiosity and fancy."---I smiled in my turn; and drawing from my work-basket a parcel of Mrs. Palmerstone's Letters to her Daughter, which I had provided for the occasion, I placed them

them in his hands.---"There," said I, "read those letters. They are the production of an English mother, who, I suspect, found herself under the same difficulty of which you complain. Read them, and tell me frankly whether the design or the subjects answer your ideas."--- Betrayed perhaps by his ingenuous simplicity, which gave importance to the feeblest attempt to favour and promote the cause of virtue, he decidedly approved the little work, and engaged my promise to prepare it for the press. We amused ourselves with the importance of the character I was about to assume, and the wreath of fame with which he engaged to decorate my brows himself at our next meeting .... We parted; and in six short weeks a life at once useful, honourable, and virtuous, was terminated in a premature grave. For some time all intercourse with Mrs. Palmerstone was suspended. Insensibly I recalled, with the painful regrets which obtruded on my mind and depressed my spirits, my friend's opinion of the work before me, and the purposes which he had judged it calculated to answer. A sort of interest, which I will not here define, now stimulated my industry; and I found a secret satisfaction in my progress, by thinking it contained somewhat of his

his honest and pure intentions.---But I am afraid I have tired your honour with this long account of motives, in which you have so little concern.

READER. Not-at-all; by no means. I am not naturally ill-natured, although somewhat impatient. It is true your book, and your private sorrows, have little to do with each other; but I have not that fastidiousness which turns from the tribute of esteem and lost comfort, because it is out of its place.

AUTHOR. Your kindness encourages me. The Letters of Mrs. Palmerstone are now finished, and I send them into the world friendless and unsupported; except indeed your honour.... But I will not be too bold. I shall be satisfied if the eye of virtue deigns to regard the writer as the humblest of her train. If one child of unsophisticated nature approves the lessons she has inculcated, she will be recompensed.

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MRS. PALMERSTONE'S LETTERS

TO

HER DAUGHTER.

LETTER I.

THE SPOILED CHILD,

OR

THE HISTORY OF MISS WEBSTER.

MY DEAR CHILD,

ON my return home last night I had the satisfaction of learning from your maid, that you had been very much pleased with your nutting party, and that farmer Gregory's daughters had had no reason to be dissatisfied with miss Palmerstone, 'for that you had been all condescension and good nature.' This intelligence compensated for my not having embraced you before you sought that repose which your long walk required, and in which I found and blessed you.

It would have been a very sensible mortification to me, and a disgrace to yourself, had you conducted yourself otherwise than you did; for unquestionably you were the best informed and the best educated girl in the company. You will do well, my Eliza, to consider whether to these incidental advantages you are able to add that quality on which their value and usefulness depend: I mean good temper.

If, in any one instance of those mild and ready compliances, those prompt and obliging services, by which you have so successfully won the good will of your companions, you had nothing better in view than the common observances of civility, which, from your condition in life, you are accustomed to receive and to return, your motive was deficient,—inasmuch as it wanted that essential grace in which its real merit consists: and you will find, under this point of view, that the *condescension* so highly extolled by Betty was, neither more nor less than respect to *yourself* before your inferiors; and, only in a dif-

a different dress, the ordinary deference which those above you exact. Genuine good nature is easily distinguished from the affectation of it. A feeling and ingenuous heart has only one object before it in all its concerns with its fellow-creatures; namely, to please, and to be loved. Its attentions are not measured by the local circumstances of fortune, rank, or its own interests, but by its capacity of usefulness, and by its power of administering satisfaction, amusement, and convenience, to those who solicit its kindness, or claim its duties.

Good nature and good sense are, in fact, what good breeding aims at, and can never attain but as it meets with the support of these auxiliaries: for without them it is mere grimace; at best, an ornament put on with our fine trappings, liable to be ruffled by every puff of wind, and soiled by the slightest touch: whilst good nature and a sound understanding firmly rest on their own solid basis, not disdainful of exterior polish, but knowing and feeling their own

power to dignify a clown, and to confer a grace beyond the reach of imitation.

You are now, my dear girl, arrived at an age which justifies your mother in thinking you capable of entering into the examination she recommends; but I am certain you will neither reject, nor be ungrateful for, the assistance that she cheerfully offers you.

Two years since, you were permitted to attend two ladies, my guests, with your grandfather, to examine the noble ruins of B—— castle. You discovered, in that excursion, that you were deficient in good nature and in good sense: you returned home in sullenness and ill humour, because the ladies, impatient to be with *your mother*, whom they had left indisposed, refused your entreaties to go three miles further in order to see a cascade, at that season of the year almost dry, but of which you had heard wonders. You may possibly recollect that no notice was taken of your behaviour at the moment. You were left to recover your usual gaiety and good manners,

manners, at your own pleasure. A few days after, an excursion was proposed to the sea-side: it met the wishes of all, and was embraced by none with greater avidity than by yourself. A week was the time allotted for our tour, and you looked forward with delight to the means of increasing your stock of shells for the ornament of the little grotto which you were then embellishing; not an idea entered your mind, that it was possible such a plan could be engaged in without including you. Your grandfather, the morning preceding our departure, asked me very gravely, in your presence, whether he was to have the pleasure of being our escort. I answered in the affirmative, and our guests seconded me by expressing their surprise at so unexpected a question. "I was not quite certain," replied he to them, "in respect to my daughter's intentions; but now I understand them. She knows that I am not ambitious of joining in the society of an infant, and much less disposed to submit

mit to the direction of a capricious one, whether she be able to reckon ten or twenty years in her age." I observed your distress, and assured him that he had nothing to fear; adding, "We shall leave the infant in the nursery, and take with us Eliza Palmerstone."

We had no cause for dissatisfaction, nor had I any reason to repent of my lenity. You left the infant to that spot in which only it is entitled to indulgence, and where even that indulgence is pernicious, if not exactly proportioned to its weakness and helpless ignorance. You are now twelve years of age, and you ought to want no inducements, but such as arise from your own heart, to establish you in the habits of gentleness and complacency; nor a better guide to the principles which enforce them, than your own reason, and the instructions which it has received.

I was once so unfortunate as to meet a girl nearly of your age, at the house of a friend with whom I passed some weeks.

The

The society which we met was, like the master, pleasant and well informed; and I recall with pleasure the happy days I enjoyed with your father in this gentleman's beautiful retreat. The house was spacious, and its owner never thought it furnished without a party of his select friends. One evening we were surprised by an unexpected enlargement of our number, by the arrival of a gentleman, his lady, and their daughter, the abovementioned damsel.

Mr. H——, our hospitable entertainer, although his house was numerously *furnished*, received them with his usual urbanity. The day had been extremely sultry, and the young lady was no sooner seated in the drawing-room, than, the first time she opened her lips, she complained of the heat, and her excessive fatigue, and expressed a desire of retiring. The mother, who appeared to me to stand much more in need of repose than her daughter, took the hint, and the ladies withdrew. The father no sooner saw the door of the apartment close

upon

upon them, than, turning to Mr. H——, he with great familiarity said, "I knew you did not expect us, and I also knew that you had your house full of friends; but I could not refuse Lydia. She claimed my promise to bring her hither as soon as she was well. Poor thing!" continued he, "she has suffered dreadfully with the tooth-ach these last four months. Doctor Simons said nothing could relieve her, but extracting two or three teeth. We thought we never should have prevailed upon her to submit to the operation: but I fortunately thought of this expedient in order to induce her to a compliance, and it happily succeeded; for, had she not complied, the consequences would have been very serious indeed; the jaw-bone being, as the doctor said, diseased from the delay of drawing the teeth." Mr. H—— assured him that the housekeeper would find no difficulty in accommodating him and the ladies, that he trusted to Mrs. Webster's good nature, should those accommodations

prove

prove less convenient than he wished them, and that he hoped miss Lydia would forget her late indisposition.

Supper was announced.—"Where is Mrs. Webster?" asked Mr. H——. "She will be here as soon as she can," was the reply: "she is never waited for." When we had nearly finished, Mrs. Webster, with a hurried and fatigued air, entered, and took her seat at the table. "Lydia is asleep," said she with a significant air to her husband, who was seated on the opposite side, and next to me. "Is miss Webster ill?" demanded I. "No," replied the father; "but when we are from home, my wife never quits the room till she is asleep:—Lydia is very fearful."

After supper our excursion for the following day was finally settled. The plan was to visit the house and gardens of a nobleman some miles distant; but, by crossing the country, not very remote. A fine navigable canal joined, indeed, the two estates. The private road was rather trou-

blesome than dangerous in summer; but it was judged better suited to the patient drudges of amusement and business, than to our high-fed and spirited horses; and we purposed taking hired horses in the morning, and sailing back in the evening; which was in fact the common mode; a beautiful pleasure-boat having been constructed by lord W——, and always ready for his visitors, or those whom curiosity might lead to his seat. These preliminaries settled, with cheerful accord we all engaged to be in the breakfast-room at six the next morning, and the necessary orders were given to the servants. Mr. Webster exulted in the prospect of the sailing part of the plan, being, as he informed us twenty times, 'immeasurably fond of the water.' We were exact to our time; the servants in readiness in the stables; the breakfast in the room, and every one in joyous confusion crowding round the table for his hasty share: but Mr. Webster and his two ladies had not appeared.

A summons

A summons from the Stentorian voice of Mr. H—— brought him hurrying into the room: 'Lydia was not ready. Would we be so good as to set out without them? They would follow us.' We obeyed. We drove slowly two or three miles: at length our tardy friends overtook us. Miss Lydia was weeping bitterly: 'she had been frightened.' One of the horses had, it seems, on first setting out, refused for an instant the collar. "Well!" cried out your father, "but he goes very quietly now, my dear young lady: and in this narrow road, with our chaise close at his nose, he cannot be very mischievous were he so disposed." She redoubled her lamentations. Mrs. Webster entreated we would take her into our chaise. Your father was passive, and I had compassion on the weakness of a mother. Miss Lydia was placed between us, to our no great amusement; for she never opened her mouth but to complain, and express her terrors; and entirely engaged our attention in re-

peating

peating our assurances of safety, where there was no danger to apprehend. In this unpleasant manner we reached our destined stage. The people of the neat little inn had been prepared to expect us, and all was in perfect order. We entered the House, and, whilst we took some slight refreshment, determined to walk to the castle through an avenue of noble elms, which reached to within a few yards of the inn. The horses were ordered to the stables, and we prepared for our walk. But now a new grievance arose. The extreme heat in the chaise had given miss Lydia a head-ach: 'she could not walk.' One of the postillions was ordered to bring the chaise again to the door. His horses were feeding at the manger, and himself quietly reposing on some clean straw. He obeyed however without showing any reluctance, but not without reflecting, I suspect, on that wanton and capricious abuse of power, which those who have wealth frequently exercise over the more indigent. He had

not

not however time given him to carry this thought, if it did occur to his simple understanding, quite so far as it would go, and I scruple not to supply here what was deficient. The want of tenderness and consideration towards the poor who serve us by their labour, or of regard and commiseration for the animal who toils for our ease, reflects a disgrace which neither talents, wealth, nor power can cover: for *service* includes mutual *obligation*; and those who forget or abuse this first social compact are, in the highest degree, reprehensible. Those who ought to serve, may stand chargeable with sloth and negligence; but those served, with the twofold imputation of injustice and cruelty.

But to return to my narration. Miss Lydia was, with her mother, conveyed to the house. We now threw our eager and delighted eyes the whole length of a magnificent gallery adorned with many of the chefs-d'œuvres of the Italian and Flemish schools: we separated, forgot each other, and

and thought no more of miss Lydia Webster. In my examination of the pictures, chance brought to my recollection the mother and daughter. They were sitting in a part of the room which I had several times passed unconscious of their being near me; but, on perceiving them, I exclaimed in a tone of surprise, "What! are you tired!" —"No," replied the mother sorrowfully: "but Lydia's shoe pinches her foot, and she cannot stand."—"Let her take it off," said I, with my eyes fixed on a beautiful landscape; "she will soon forget her shoe and her foot also, by looking at these unrivalled proofs of art and genius."—"I know nothing about pictures," sullenly muttered miss Lydia: "I wish I had not come." —"Give your mamma, at least, an opportunity of gratifying her curiosity," said I, seating myself at her side. "I will remain with you. Let us persuade her to go round the gallery."—"To say the truth," answered Mrs. Webster pensively, "I am too unwell, my dear madam, to profit by

your

your politeness. I wished much to have been excused from this jaunt, being sensible that I was not in health or spirits to enjoy it; but Lydia would not be denied. And now," added she, sighing, "she has no pleasure!"

The pale and dejected countenance of the poor lady fully evinced the truth of her apology; and with a short one for my quitting her, I reassumed my delightful researches. We returned to a late dinner at the inn; a full moon insured us a safe and pleasant navigation. The repast was such as might have been expected from people that wished to content guests who were ready to recompense them liberally for their trouble: it was abundant, plain, and neat. Unfortunately there was no bread-pudding, Mr. Webster having *unaccountably* forgotten to order this important article for his daughter. I recommended some excellent custard and bread. Miss replied, 'she did not love custard, and could not eat of any thing.'—"You do just as I do," answered

answered I with careless indifference; "for, if I find the provision before me does not please, I instantly conclude abstinence necessary: and I am rarely mistaken; the absence of one meal generally provides me with an appetite for the next." She coloured with angry spite; and the fond mother said, "Lydia at all times has a very poor appetite:" an assertion that by no means agreed with her appearance.

The elegance of the dessert amply made up for the simplicity of the dinner. Lord W——'s gardener, knowing the intimacy which subsisted between his master and our friend, furnished the fruit; but there were no oranges, and miss Lydia was again disappointed. We now commenced our ramble through the grounds, leaving the discontented miss Lydia, the tight shoe, and the weak mother, in the house, with a plentiful repast of bread and butter and coffee before them.

The refreshing breeze that succeeded to the setting sun rendered our walk all that we

we wished, and we forgot in its pleasures the passing hours, till one of the boatmen gave us notice that all was in readiness, and that it was time to depart.

Some of our gentlemen hastened to the inn, which we all had to pass in our road to the side of the canal, and the rest of the party took the same direction.

Mr. Webster, who, without much discriminating taste, in the pleasures of the day had enjoyed all with perfect good humour and cheerfulness, now indulged the innocent and expected gratification of his particular share of the amusement. His hilarity increased, and he exclaimed in the honest bursts of his joy, "What delicious weather! What a charming breeze! I will venture to bet that we shall not shift a sail twice the whole course, nor want the rope except at the locks." Then, placing my arm under his own, with simple good will he added, "My dear Mrs. Palmerstone, you will sing, will you not? I have my flute in my pocket, and with the horns it will be

be delightful." By this time we joined Mrs. and miss Webster at the house, where poor Mr. Webster was doomed to a grievous disappointment of his hopes. Miss Lydia declared 'she would not go home by water, she would sooner die than go into a boat.' Entreaties, arguments, all were repeatedly tried to no effect on the stubborn miss Lydia. Mrs. Webster appeared to be unacquainted with this part of her husband's plan, and with seriousness reminded him of his daughter's known repugnance to the water. I suspected that he had trusted something to our influence on this point. Be this as it may, it is certain that her mild expedient would have easily settled the matter. She proposed going in a chaise with her daughter, said that she really preferred it; and urged to the blubbering girl, the safety with which she would travel, attended by their servant on horseback. 'What! at *that hour*, to go without her papa!' Her terrors increased; and she seized hold of his arm, saying her head was bursting.

Mr.

Mr. H——, with ill-concealed indignation, said Mr. Mackenzie should go with the ladies in the chaise. This worthy domestic had been twenty years the confidential attendant on Mr. H——, had married the housekeeper, and enjoyed the post of house-steward. Miss Lydia clung still closer to her father, who, ashamed of the delay he occasioned, and probably of his daughter, declared his intention of seeing her home himself. We therefore left the family party, and repaired to the boat, where we found honest Mackenzie, in the plenitude of his power and glory, giving to each of our musical band their parts, and exulting in the order which he had established; his French horn in his hand, and waiting with eager looks to see us, in order to serenade us. We now, fearless of danger, gave ourselves up to the peril of gliding over the smooth water of a canal in the month of July, guided by a moon which yielded in nothing to the source from which it borrowed its mild radiance;

radiance; and, with a few regrets at the absence of poor Mr. Webster and his flute excepted, enjoyed all the pleasures of social ease and gratified taste.—Thus finished our party of pleasure.

The following morning Mr. Webster with undissembled regret spoke of his disappointment, and with concern of his wife, she being too much indisposed to leave her room. Miss Lydia, with her mother and father, quitted us in a few days after. She probably discovered of how little importance she was in the house, and the perfect indifference with which her whims were treated. This, with her father's wish of remaining longer in a society, in which, simply by the effect of unoffending good nature and cheerfulness, he had gained an interest, determined the young lady; and she returned to a home where her authority was better established; leaving with Mr. H—— a pleasure entirely new to him—joy at the departure of a guest.

After supper he mentioned with no little asperity

asperity the folly of his relations, Mr. and Mrs. Webster. He expatiated largely on the fatal effects of indulgence; and pronounced without mercy, that these parents stood chargeable with all the errors and miseries that would inevitably arise from their weak and injudicious conduct towards the object of their blind idolatry. "You do not altogether agree with me, Mrs. Palmerstone," added he, looking steadily in my face.—"Not entirely," answered I, smiling. "I knew it, I knew it," cried he, eagerly turning to my husband. "Let us hear her."—"Miss Webster's age," said I, "somewhat lessens with me the faults of her parents. She is not deficient in common sense. She must have seen, and she does see, the governing principle which regulates the actions and conduct of her parents, as these relate to her. No weakness with which it stands chargeable can change its nature; it is affection for their child. She sees that to this affection all their own ease, their own pleasure, and

their

their own comforts, are subordinate. With such a conviction, she wants a heart formed to meet kindness: otherwise, such a conviction must have produced love and gratitude. I will allow that her understanding is not, perhaps, competent to that discrimination which a more mature judgement would make, as to the views and effects of her parents' excessive fondness. She may not perceive that weakness which shrinks from the task of controlling, contradicting, and correcting, an only and darling child. But I am confident that the understanding of a child at twelve years old is fully sufficient to see, and her conscience to feel, all the reciprocal obligations which even mistaken kindness enforces on a grateful heart. At five or six years of age I should expect nothing more from an indulged and *spoiled child*, as such are justly called, but proofs of its unchecked will, and capricious fits of good humour. But miss Webster is not an infant. She knows the difference between good and evil.

evil. She has been taught a religion which is *plain* and *positive* as to all the laws and precepts offered to us for our rule and guidance; and 'to do good, and to live peaceably with our fellow-creatures,' is a duty which she would admit as incontrovertible, where the question stood independent of her own pettish and selfish gratifications. I allow, for who will dissent? that excessive indulgence on the side of the parent is and must be pernicious to the child, inasmuch as it strengthens the selfish propensities of our nature, and engenders pride and stubbornness; but I think there must be a radical disease in that bosom in which it extinguishes love and deadens gratitude. No: parental love, under any form, cannot, I conceive, do this.

It rarely, I trust, produces that sullen peevishness which refuses to enjoy the very pleasure it has solicited; which delights in opposing itself to the wishes of every one around; which seems to feed, as I may say, on its *ability* to distress the fond heart weakly

weakly given up to its power. It would not, it could not, feel a joy in spreading abroad its discontents by continually interposing its spirit of contradiction and sourness, to the annoyance of every one within its reach. God forbid! Nor can I judge so meanly of human nature. I am persuaded that this very girl would be shocked at the representation of a mind so lost to all the genuine feelings of human nature; and she would with indignation deny her resemblance to such a picture of depravity as I have just drawn. But I would next ask this girl, what she conceived must be the condition of that mind, in advanced life, which in youth had checked every sympathetic affection of nature by the selfish indulgence of a petulant temper. Is she not old enough to know that neither riches nor rank, nor beauty nor talents, will purchase the good will of her fellow-creatures? If she is ignorant of this truth, she is indeed to be pitied; but I would convince her in an hour, that, weak and corrupt as the world is, it still knows

knows the price of what is valuable, and will never give esteem and pure affection without receiving an equivalent for them. To be happy herself, she must make others happy. This is the duty imposed on every rational and responsible being; and by neglecting it she not only incurs the disapprobation of God, but also the contempt of the world. Left to herself, she would soon find that neglect and indifference would carelessly meet her cold and froward temper; and it would not surprise me to see such a girl, at twenty, *mortified* into the conviction that no one was of consequence in society, who refused to be useful or amiable. This poor girl has yet to learn the pleasures annexed to benevolence. She is a stranger to the satisfaction which arises from self-denial, when exerted for the comfort or accommodation of others. She has still to learn, that in a thousand instances the *obliger* is the *obliged*. Let her make the experiment, and she will regret the past; but, should she refuse to give up her

wayward humours, and were I consulted by her parents, or any parents in Mr. and Mrs. Webster's difficulties, I should in the first place strenuously advise them to send her from the parental roof. But do not fancy that it would be to place her in a school, where her fortune and rank in life would be considered. Accomplishments are here quite out of the question; these are always secondary considerations with me; and the most elegant and finished structure of this kind is of no more value in my eyes than a house built of cards, if erected on no better foundation than vanity. We are considering the health of miss Webster's mind, not the decoration of her person: and to restore this to its native vigour, I would send her to such a family as your worthy curate's, who, on an income which barely supplies food and raiment, contrive by industry and œconomy to live contented and cheerfully. Let her have no indulgences beyond such as satisfy those about her, and I will venture to predict that she will soon be con-

tented with her dinner without her favourite pudding, and able to put on her clothes without a slave to assist her. She would soon perceive that she was too insignificant to interrupt the business or the amusements of such a family; and that her incapacity for usefulness could only be excused by her being good-natured and unoffending. But you will object to me the impracticability of finding amongst the independent and the wise any who would burthen themselves with an inmate of miss Webster's description. I admit the difficulty: for in proportion as they were qualified for the task would be their repugnance to undertake it. But there are country schools in which, at least, she might be taught something useful, and in which she would find a remedy for overweening pride and fastidious discontent; in which, without a miracle, she might have to encounter children as unaccustomed to submission as herself. The hardest stones are smoothed by friction,

and a few contests with beings like herself would have a wonderful effect on the asperities of miss Webster's temper."

"Your remedies are too slow and lenient, my dear Mrs. Palmerstone," cried Mr. H—— with eagerness: "I would, were I this girl's father, cure her in one month. I do not see why a good flogging should not be as salutary to a wilful girl as to a stubborn boy. I am no advocate for the whip; but with the wise man I think there are cases when 'to spare the rod is to spoil the child,' and by Jupiter I would make this girl tremble at the sight of one!"—"That you might easily do," replied I laughing; "for so you do poor Punto when you are angry with him: but I much doubt whether your corrective would produce in miss Webster the same docility it does in your pointer: I rather think it would but stiffen the clay, and instead of the fruit you expect, you would only see cunning and malice spring up. Confess, therefore, that you

you are not qualified for a preceptor to miss Lydia; and use your influence with her parents to send her to a good school."

I am sorry to finish my letter by adding, that my advice and Mr. H——'s friendly expostulations with Mr. and Mrs. Webster were useless. No arguments could prevail on them to adopt a measure which their child opposed. Miss Webster happily, however, lived not to meet those mortifications nor those dangers which I had predicted: perpetual discontent and habitual indolence undermined her health: as this declined, she became more irritable and peevish, and at seventeen years of age quitted a world which she was so totally unfit to meet. Her fond mother, whose strength and spirits she had exhausted, sunk into her grave two years after the death of her ungrateful but lamented child.—— Yours, my Eliza, with I trust a better disciplined tenderness, but not less affection, signs the name of

ANGELICA PALMERSTONE.

LETTER II.

MARIA MORTIMER,

OR THE

FATAL EFFECTS OF CURIOSITY.

MY DEAR ELIZA,

A FEW days since, a lady well known to you was quietly occupied with her daughter in their usual lessons, when the door of the dressing-room was suddenly opened by an old, faithful, and cherished housekeeper, who in great agitation, and with eyes inflamed by weeping, begged her lady's permission to speak to her of an affair of much consequence, and which admitted of no delay: "an affair, madam," added she, again bursting into tears, "ruinous to me and my poor son, unless your goodness and counsel save us." The lady instantly rose from her seat, took the hand of the poor trembling housekeeper, and, placing her by the fireside, assured her that she had nothing

nothing to apprehend in any affair in which her comfort and services could be useful and effectual: then turning to her daughter she said, "You will retire, my love; and as you go to the music-room tell James that I am particularly engaged, and must not be interrupted by any one." The young lady slowly and reluctantly withdrew, eyeing the housekeeper with the most eager curiosity.

Before the good woman had had time to collect herself sufficiently to begin, or to preface an affair intimately connected with the welfare of her family, the young lady again appeared. 'She had forgotten to ask her mamma whether she was to practise the new lessons for the harp, or to play those she knew on the piano-forte.'—The mother with mildness, but seriousness, said she might do both; for that she would ring when it was necessary for her to return.

In something *less* than half an hour the door of the apartment was *again* opened, and on tip-toe advanced the abovementioned restless damsel. 'She begged ten thousand

thousand pardons—she would not stay—but she believed Haydn's concertos were in the room—she could find them in a minute.' She was permitted in silence to look for them; and the search was a work of time, but successful at last. She then replaced every thing in the most *exact order*—and, glancing a side look at her old friend's flushed countenance, once more quitted the room. The lady had however by this time learned the cause of her housekeeper's trouble: it was a perplexed and delicate business in itself, and required further discussion—which they had hardly begun, when the inquisitive spy again stood before them . . . , 'James had sent off Mrs. Beaumont's carriage . . . she was in it, and certainly came with the purpose of carrying them to see the Exhibition, as she had engaged to do . . . She had told James he was wrong . . . He said, he had delivered his lady's orders . . . and Mrs. Beaumont had left her compliments, and would dine with her.' The lady, with some asperity of manner, said,

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'She was very glad that short memories did not infect *all* the family.... that James had done his duty... and that the next time she gave him similar orders they should extend to intruders *within* the house as well as to those without.' The young lady, abashed, left the room; and when she again appeared, her eyes exhibited as strong marks of sorrow as those of the poor woman who had quitted the apartment.

I am not quite certain whether my Eliza will enter into my motives of tenderness, for introducing a subject of reprehension in the manner which I have adopted; but I am convinced that she has been sensibly touched by the disgrace she has incurred with her mother. But has my dear girl paid due attention to the cause of this disgrace, or the motives which led her into a forgetfulness of her habitual circumspection? I know she cannot impose on her understanding, if she fairly weighs the question, and I am sure she will employ no subterfuge for truth. You wished to know

Mrs. Clark's secret; and this desire not only entirely diverted your attention from your own concerns, but also rendered you an impertinent intruder on those of others.

We will, my dear child, now consider the claims this curiosity has to indulgence, and the gratifications it has to give in return. The motive which stimulates us to pry into the concerns of others, is, with some, the importance they annex to the knowledge of these affairs. No sooner are they in possession of a secret, than they begin to weigh their wisdom, their consequence, their superiority; they think they have the advantage over the person whose secrets they have discovered. Some there are, who have still more unjustifiable views: but these I will pass over, and consider a little more particularly the common herd of secret-hunters. Ninety-nine times out of a hundred, the secrets which are so eagerly sought for would neither interest the parties concerned, nor repay the time and trouble lost upon them, were it not for

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the idle satisfaction of repeating them, with those inferences and comments which self-conceit suggests. I call this, my Eliza, an idle satisfaction: but I might have used harsher language; for we must know very little indeed of the duties of life, if we are ignorant that we are answerable for all the consequences arising from divulging a secret committed to our keeping: and what is more, whether the intelligence be obtained directly or indirectly, the obligation on our discretion is the same—if we wish to avoid exciting distrust, hatred, and contempt.... The following little narrative will evince the truth of this observation; and will, I trust, convince my child that curiosity demands a greater proportion of wisdom, than ordinarily falls to the lot of those who are most disposed to indulge its craving and restless suggestions:—

My godmother lived at Bristol; but she had a beautiful house at Clifton, in which she usually spent the summer months. This lady was also my mother's aunt; and this

this double tie, with her amiable qualities, produced an intercourse of the most affectionate kind between my mother and herself. We frequently passed two or three months with her at Clifton; and the last time I enjoyed that pleasure I was nearly of your age. In the autumn my mother engaged her aunt's promise of spending some of the winter months with her in town; but this promise was conditional. I was to be the companion of her journey, and an inmate with her until she could leave Bristol; which it was inconvenient to her to do before the middle of January. This point, as most others, she carried easily with a niece who loved her as a child; and I was left, with many injunctions of her not spoiling *entirely* her pet. My godmother, I suspect, did not very scrupulously observe my mother's orders; for the Christmas holidays were passed in a style of gaiety to which I had hitherto been a stranger. Balls and suppers succeeded each other in rotation; and my godmother wisely thought,

thought, that a girl who saw not her bed before midnight had little inclination for lessons the next morning. I was therefore permitted to amuse myself as I pleased. Within a few doors of us lived miss Maria Mortimer, a girl of my own age. I constantly met her in our evening parties, and her vivacity and good humour delighted me. I frequently carried her with me to the place of appointment, and the same carriage conveyed us to our respective homes. She became my morning guest, and the favourite of my godmother, 'because her Angelica liked her,' and she was good-natured.' The impressions of kindness and mutual good will are not easily effaced from the youthful heart.

The death of my godmother, in the following year, prevented any further opportunity of my seeing miss Mortimer; but I remembered her with affection, and regretted the loss of her acquaintance. Many years after, I met with a lady whom I had known whilst at my godmother's; and I availed

availed myself of the occasion, to make inquiries after my friend Maria. "I shall pass the day with your mother to-morrow," said she, "and I will then give you the history of your lively companion: you will be sorry to hear of her present situation." I was, as you, my Eliza, will easily conceive, tormented with my conjectures during the intermediate space of time. The morrow at length arrived, and our guest began as follows:—

"I believe," said Mrs. Litchford, "you never saw Mrs. Dormer, the aunt of your young friend. Her close confinement to her room, owing to an accident in her youth, by which her hip was dislocated, rendered her quitting it extremely painful to her; and I think, at the time you were at Bristol, she had too many visitors in her own way to be troubled with two lively romps. Maria Mortimer was left to this lady's care, whilst yet in her cradle.

"Mrs. Dormer loved her sister, the last surviving parent of the infant Maria, with an

an undivided affection. She was a single woman, her fortune considerable, and her natural disposition excellent: the misfortunes which had succeeded her sister's marriage threw the little orphan entirely on her protection; and this circumstance gave to her claims additional force in the heart of her aunt. I was, at this period, on terms of intimacy with Mrs. Dormer, and the daily witness of the tender regard she had for her niece. At that time her love of society counteracted the inconveniences of changing her place, and she frequently visited in her particular circle; but a rheumatic fever, adding to her former lameness, rendered this indulgence too painful, and she was contented to enjoy health and ease in her bed-chamber. I had hoped, that, in her vigilant cares for the infant, my good friend would have found a check for a weakness which considerably diminished her respectability, and took from her understanding its genuine worth: but in proportion as her bodily activity

activity became impeded, that of her mind seemed to increase, and her love of tittle-tattle to acquire more and more power over her good sense. Her temper naturally cheerful, and her spirits unbroken, it frequently appeared to me that she thought of her particular infirmity only as an evil which opposed her researches after *news*; nor considered her seclusion from the world as a further misfortune, than as it prevented her from seeing all that was doing in it. My talents in this way by no means equalled my regard for my old friend, and I soon discovered that I might, without offence, employ those I had, in my little circle of domestic cares; for Mrs. Dormer was happily supplied with friends much better qualified than myself for the office of public intelligencers. The favours, and the welcome, these received, perhaps stimulated their zeal, and quickened their invention; for it is certain that Mrs. Dormer knew of events before they happened, and was minutely informed of many that never happened at all. But

no human felicity is permanent. My poor friend discovered this truth as painfully as those who meet it in much weightier concerns. It fell out, from time to time, that her faithful gossips were allured from her by other news-mongers: sometimes their gleanings were too scanty, and at others too important, to be exhibited in Mrs. Dormer's bed-room. In the first instance, petty quarrels and little jealousies sometimes produced dissensions, and Mrs. Dormer was left to solitude. These accidental privations of her accustomed gratifications were heavily and impatiently sustained by the old lady. Placed in her easy-chair, by the window, she passed the hours in fretful conjectures. Her next-door neighbour gave a dinner.... She saw the guests, ... but what could the entertainer give them? The season for fowls was over—their cook could not fry a sole—and the mistress of the house was a mere dawdle, who new nothing.—The post-man left a letter at the opposite house... Who could it be for?....She had frequently

quently observed the chamber-maid officiously receive letters at Mrs. P—'s.....She doubted not but the hussey was in some secret with the young lady.... Not a bundle, or a bandbox, could escape the vigilant eyes of Mrs. Margery Dormer. To find out what these contained exceeded her power...But I do assure you that she has frequently dispatched a servant to follow the person who carried them, to the house they were destined for; and if the bearers could, on any pretence, be brought before her, they were questioned, and dismissed with some little order to their employer.

"You will not be surprised that the natural curiosity of a lively and acute child should not remain inactive in the hands of Mrs. Dormer. Maria lisped the nursery-news to her aunt; and, in proportion as she understood the value of her communications, became a spy in every corner of the house. It so happened that some intelligence she had carried to her aunt affected the interests of the housekeeper, whose influence was not

not to be controlled with impunity; and Maria was sent to a good day-school in the neighbourhood, as something more in Mrs. Housekeeper's favour, than her being always in the way—but far short of her wishes to see her removed to a distance. The indulgent aunt would not part with her, and, to content her gouvernante, ordered a parlour for the particular play-room of Maria, and left to the housekeeper the care of confining her to that apartment when not with her: this regulation produced others, and Maria found that she had now the liberty of entertaining her own company. Soon after you knew her she became very fond of miss Baxter, a girl nearly of her own age, and not only her school-fellow but near neighbour. This child was the daughter of a very respectable merchant; her mother, one of the most estimable women in Bristol; and such was the conduct of the family, that it had imposed restraint even on Mrs. Dormer's coterie; for domestic harmony, a judicious œconomy,

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and elegant ease, met every inquiry and checked every animadversion.

"Fanny was the only daughter in a family consisting of six children; and the fond mother, pleased with the companion of her child's choice, facilitated an intercourse she conceived useful to both the girls. Maria one afternoon expected her friend, and with much impatience found she had greatly exceeded the usual hour of appointment. On Fanny's entering the little parlour Maria hastily approached to chide her delay: but joy and kindness mingling with this reproof, she eagerly drew nigh her to untie her bonnet, which the wearer was languidly and slowly attempting to do. She was struck by the appearance of a face swelled with weeping, and by an air of sadness, which in an instant repressed her own vivacity; but pity and sympathy soon yielded to curiosity, and soothing kindness to *questions*. 'Had she disobliged her mamma?... Had she lost or broken any thing?... Had her brother and she quarrelled?

relled?...Was not her mother rather harsh? ...Had her papa been angry with her? She thought he appeared to be very severe.' Poor Fanny, whose tears had flowed unrestrained and in silence, was now roused to reply, 'Her mother harsh and unkind?... Her papa passionate and severe?...Her mamma was all goodness; and as to her father, she had never seen him in a passion but *once* in her life.' The tears of Fanny had given place to the glow of offended love, and she looked with resentment on Maria; who, heedless of the sentiments which she had produced, with eagerness pursued her interrogations. 'She was *glad* Mr. Baxter was so good-humoured... but how did it happen that he was angry? and when was this? and how was this?' followed, with Maria's usual vivacity. 'Some time ago,' answered the unsuspecting Fanny: 'it was when my mamma was so dreadfully ill.'—'Well,' said Maria, 'that is very strange! was he not sorry, then?'—'Dear me! to be sure he was,' answered with

with simplicity the amiable girl: 'it was his grief which put him into a passion; for he thought my mamma was dying.'—'Well, how was it?' asked Maria.—'Why,' replied Fanny, 'my papa was absent; and my brother persuaded mamma to let him ride the new pony which had been bought for him. We all went to spend the day with Mrs. N——, a little way beyond Clifton, and went in the coach; but George begged so hard to go on his pony that my mamma consented, and the footman assured her that a child of four years old could govern him. On returning home, all in a moment, we perceived the pony galloping by the coach window without a rider. I shall never forget my mother: she sunk back in the coach, and I thought her quite dead. George had been thrown from the horse; and his face was covered with blood when the servants brought him to the coach. My mother just then opened her eyes. She sighed deeply, and fell into another fit. Mrs. P—— fortunately returned to Bristol with

with us. I think I should have died with terror had she not been with us. She desired the coachman to make haste home, and my poor mamma was carried up stairs, and put to bed; but she was so ill that Mrs. P—— sent off a servant to fetch my papa, and the whole family was in sad trouble. The next morning Mrs. P—— had us all into the breakfast-room: she had been up the whole night with mamma. She was very kind to us, and comforted poor George, whose face was sadly cut, and told me I should see my mother, who was out of danger. After we had breakfasted Mrs. P—— led me into my mother's room; and told her, smiling, 'that she had brought a poor little weeping girl to see her, who would stay with her till she went home to change her linen.' My dear mamma did not speak, but kissed me so kindly that I could not bear it; and I went to the other side of the bed. In this moment my papa came into the room in his boots, and his hair all in disorder with the rain, and

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the hurry of riding all the night almost. My mamma spoke so faintly that I could not hear what she said: but I was quite terrified to hear my papa say with *much anger*, 'The cursed blockhead!' and then, 'I will never forgive the rascal!' and then, 'He shall go this very hour!'—I crept to the curtain, and I heard my mother's sweet voice: she said, 'Indeed it was all her fault... the poor fellow will break his heart'... and she wept. My papa's anger was quite gone, and he now comforted her, and said a thousand tender words to her: but he told her that he could not yet pardon John, for he knew, although she did not, that the pony had thrown my brother a month before, and that he had then received positive orders, not to permit George to mount him till he had been better broken in. So thank God my mamma got well; and my good papa forgave John, and my brother—— But now,' said she sighing, 'we are all unhappy again.'

"The artless account Fanny had been induced

induced to give, from her wish to justify her father, by no means appeased the cravings of Maria's curiosity; something yet remained untold... and she now tried to subdue the instinctive prudence of Fanny, by attacking her heart. 'Friends like themselves ought to have no secrets unshared.... She, that loved her so dearly, might surely be trusted... She might depend on her not speaking of any thing she told her; for that was odious!'—'I have nothing to tell you,' said the weeping girl: 'I cannot find out what is the reason my mamma is so uneasy, and that it is which makes me unhappy. We met as usual this morning at breakfast, for my dear papa says he is never at home unless his children are around him. We were all as gay as larks, when a letter was delivered to my father: the man who brought it was called an express, and had travelled the whole night. My father, on reading it, turned as pale as ashes, and his hand trembled; he sunk back on the sofa; and my mamma,

terrified, bade us leave the room, for that our father was ill. 'Send Mr. Jackson hither,' added she to me; 'and do you remain in the hall, Fanny, and take care that no one enters. Your father may sleep.'— I obeyed. And shortly after, my papa and our head clerk set off in a post-chaise and four; and Mr. Jackson said, as he passed the hall, 'he was going to London.' I now crept up stairs to my mamma. I heard her shut her chamber-door hastily, but, on approaching it, found it a-jar; the bolt had not slipped. I believe my mamma did not hear me enter, for she was stretched on the bed, and sobbing. She groaned, and said, 'My dear children! what will become of my children!' I approached the bed, and she started with surprise. 'Is it you, my Fanny?' said she. 'Leave me, my love; your father's hasty journey has been too much for me. I will try to compose my spirits: take care that no one comes into my room.' I retired, and watched at the door till I heard my mother's

ther's steps in the room; and I tapped. She opened the door, and I was astonished to see her dressed as usual for dinner; the time for which was nigh. She spoke to me with cheerfulness; but I saw she was yet very uneasy. She sat at table with us, but did not eat a morsel; and said, 'nothing but a cup of coffee would relieve her headach.' I would have staid with her; but she said, 'No, no, I am better by myself; you must go: on no account would I have you disappoint Maria:' and the tears, which fell from her eyes, almost suffocated her... She tried to smile, and said, 'I am quite a child to day... this nervous complaint must be humoured. But she did not deceive me —I am sure she is fretting about my dear papa, and I am quite miserable.'

"Poor Fanny's spirits bore testimony to the sincerity of her heart: the visit finished without amusement, and she returned home dejected. No sooner was she departed than Maria carried this inexplicable tale to her aunt's apartment. She was enjoying

a pool at quadrille with a party of her most confidential friends, and, when Maria entered, had actually taken in with her cards the three matadores, and 'I play alone' hung on her lips. From habit, rather than expectation, she suspended her purpose, in order to ask Maria, whether she had heard any *news*. Thus invited, Maria detailed the conversation of the afternoon; and, curious in her turn, listened to the inferences and comments it would draw, for her own better information. Mrs. Dormer and her friends listened with an interest which banished quadrille from their thoughts. Maria now heard half-concealed doubts of Mr. Baxter's circumstances passing round the table.... 'Four female servants, and two men servants, with a carriage, were not kept for nothing'.... 'Mrs. Baxter was a very easy mistress'.... 'It was a pity she had not remembered a little better the fortune she brought her husband'... 'Two or three thousand pounds was no great matter, and little adequate to the expense

pense of such a family'....'Mr. Baxter, it was said, was rich when he married; but who could tell what the fortune of a commercial man was?...And his marrying a woman for love, was no proof of his being above the want of a fortune, although it was a pretty strong one of his being above prudential considerations'....'They confessed they were not surprised'....'They had long expected something to transpire from that quarter.' Maria, who entered little into these observations, or reflected on the want of discretion which had occasioned them, now recalled her aunt's attention to her cards; for Maria was a tolerable adept at the card-table. The old lady, therefore, finished the pool by the triumph of her matadore game; and the party separated. Before the following day had closed, 'Mr. Baxter was a ruined man...had escaped from his creditors, and gone off to Holland.' 'A person who had a large sum of money in Mr. Baxter's hands was instantly alarmed by this whispered but widely circulating

culating report; and, consulting more his own security than the truth of the rumour, took such measures as the laws of this country have provided for such cases. These necessary steps brought him before Mrs. Baxter; and the suspicions which alone rendered them necessary, were inhumanly and bluntly avowed to the unhappy woman. Terrified by this, as she conceived, irrecoverable shock on the credit of her husband, and knowing the vexatious circumstance that had hurried him to London, her alarmed spirits seized as inevitable all the dreadful consequences of his ruin to herself and her children. She was instantly attacked by fainting fits, to which for some time she had been subject; but they now were succeeded by strong convulsions, which in twelve hours terminated in her death.

"Mr. Baxter in the mean time was experiencing in London the sweet fruits of a life eminently distinguished by undeviating integrity and industry. Not only friends, with

with whom time and mutual services had connected him, came forward to his aid with an alacrity which was as honourable to themselves as it was useful to him, but those who knew little more of him than his reputation for talents and prudence entered with zeal into measures which the exigency of his affairs required. This arose from the capture of a very rich ship, in which Mr. Baxter was very deeply concerned. He had trusted to the ratification of peace, which had been signed by the powers in Europe, reaching the distant port at which the ship took in its valuable cargo, before it was ready to sail; but it unfortunately happened that the dispatch was beyond his calculations, and the vessel became the prize of the enemy—at a moment however which rendered it an equivocal capture. His commercial friends unanimously determined to support him in trying to establish the illegality of the prize, and, during the detention of the ship, to assist him with their credit. Re-assured by this

support,

support, and satisfied that the blow was not so heavy as in the first moment of surprise he had apprehended, he wrote a letter of comfort to his beloved wife; conjured her to be cheerful, assured her that every cloud was dissipated, and that in the course of a few more days he hoped to be happy in the bosom of his family. With this letter he dispatched Mr. Jackson, his clerk, referring her to him for every other detail.—Poor man! the object of his first and last care stood in need of no earthly consolation; all that remained of the duties of love and of respect was, to consign her mortal frame to its parent earth; the spirit which had animated it was returned to its Maker, and enjoying the recompense of a well-spent life.

"Mr. Jackson, who had known Mrs. Baxter from her childhood, in performing the last duties to her remains, paid that tribute of grief at her grave which her wretched husband was the victim of in town. Harassed by his late business, and fatigued

by

by continual hurry, the shocking intelligence of Mrs. Baxter's death, though communicated to him with every caution that friendship could suggest, totally subdued him. A violent fever followed, during which his life was for some days despaired of. When this alarm had passed, Mr. Baxter found that he had nothing in Bristol to interest his mind but his children. These he knew had been under my care and roof from the first saddening hour: and I have reason to hope that he was assured of their comforts. He now, therefore, listened to an offer urgently pressed on him by his London friends; namely, remaining there as partner in a branch of commerce at once solid and lucrative. Mindful of every engagement of honour and generosity, Mr. Baxter connected his faithful friend Mr. Jackson with himself in the business carried on at Bristol; and this gentleman succeeded to his place in the house, and to those concerns in which he had for so many years assisted.

"Mr. Litchford had happily convinced the timid and ungenerous creditor, that he had no foundation for his alarms; and the man, struck by the effects which his hasty proceedings had occasioned, mentioned, with expressions of sorrow, the quarter from whence the communication of Mr. Baxter's insolvency had come to his ears. This was, without a doubt, from the bed-chamber of Mrs. Dormer; and it called upon us for such inquiries as naturally suggested themselves on such an occasion. Mrs. Baxter, a sister of my poor friend, had, on the first alarm, joined the unhappy family: she was also with me; and Fanny was present when my husband related to us the particulars which I have mentioned relative to the fatal rumour which had prevailed. The dear girl turned as pale as death, and, grasping my hand, said, 'Surely... but it cannot be... it is impossible!' It is sufficient to say that her artless confession followed, and which the events I have detailed have given you. Mrs. F. Baxter, exceedingly

exceedingly shocked by this representation, spoke of it, in all the bitterness of her sorrow, to every sympathizing friend who approached her; and it became the general opinion, that a girl of twelve or thirteen years of age could not be ignorant of the *culpability of that incitement* which induced her to betray a confidence she had so powerfully solicited, and so positively engaged to preserve. No one was disposed to think her *youth* any excuse for her fault, nor a plea of exemption from disgrace. The coterie of Mrs. Dormer had no respectability to lose; but my old friend perceived that from that hour she had survived her own... She was neglected, and her name became proverbial; every idle story was called 'a Mrs. Margery Dormer;' and the few who still paid their court to her nice suppers and card-purse went under the appellation of Mrs. Dormer's *runners*. As few were ambitious of this title, she insensibly became the prey of the needy and servile; and she is at this hour surrounded by

by a few interested and ignorant people, who, whilst they pillage her, flatter and ruin poor Maria.

"Mrs. Dormer is upwards of seventy: her good humour, I am told, has given place, as her infirmities have increased, to the peevishness of an old age unsupported by better principles than those which Mrs. Dormer has encouraged. Maria is closely confined to her aunt's room; and, when seen, it is in company little to her advantage, and I much fear for her future situation."

Mrs. Litchford paused. "You have," said I, "powerfully excited my feelings for the family of Mr. Baxter and himself. Will you indulge me by saying what is their precise situation now, and in what manner the loss of such a mother has been supplied to them all—but particularly to poor Fanny?" — "With pleasure," returned Mrs. Litchford; "for, except in one point, their prospects are smiling. I am now Mr. Baxter's guest, and have been so annually ever since he left Bristol. Mr. Baxter

Baxter is now a *very rich man*, in the general sense of the word; and, what is of much more importance, *rich* in the esteem and, I may say, veneration of those who know him. But sorry am I to add, that neither the extensive usefulness of his life, nor the success with which it has pleased Heaven to crown his prudence, has been able to erase from his memory his former happiness: and from possessing the most cheerful and equal temper of mind that ever blessed man, he is now become habitually melancholy and reserved. The enjoyments of his family and friends are clouded by his pensive sadness, but never broken in upon by his caprice. He appears to value his existence only as it is useful to his children and his fellow-creatures. But whilst he anxiously contributes to the comfort of all who approach him, he inflicts the pang arising from their conviction that he wants happiness himself.

"His family have been wisely and prudently governed by my friend, Mrs. F. Baxter;

Baxter; and Fanny is a lovely and amiable young woman. I had, a few days since, a painful proof of the state and temper of Mr. Baxter's mind. A slight cold prevented my going with the young people, my husband, and Mrs. F. Baxter, to see a royal review in the park. My friend Mr. Baxter was, like myself, slightly indisposed. We remained in the library, where the collected family had breakfasted. I produced my work-bag, and, in jest, told him we should be good company; for that I had a cough always ready to answer his: 'and when we are tired of this harmony,' added I, 'you shall read to me.' I thought he saw my purpose with kindness; and I exerted my powers of amusement. I succeeded: he appeared easy and cheerful. Something led me to mention his daughter; and yielding to the tender, and perhaps partial, love I bear her, I enlarged upon her good qualities, her improvement, her temper, and her conduct... Casting up my eyes from my work, in order to meet an acquiescent

acquiescent smile, to my confusion I saw my friend standing opposite a full length picture of his wife, which filled a pannel in the room. I was struck dumb, and regretted my folly ... After a painful silence, *to me*, he seemed at once to take up the subject which I had so inadvertently started. 'Yes,' said he mournfully: 'yes, blessed be God! she is worthy of the saint who gave her .... You knew, you loved,' continued he, pointing to the beautiful representation of his wife, 'this *victim* of the heedless communication of infants .... this unoffending and innocent object of malignancy and imbecility .... this sacrifice to suspicion and base ingratitude .... You knew her .... Then do not wonder that time has no soothing influence *for me*.' He covered his face, and burst into tears. I answered him with mine; to which vexation for my fault gave bitterness. At length I hazarded those arguments which religion and reason enforce as the most consolatory; and, with all the warmth of affection,

affection, urged to him resignation to the divine will, and his constant endeavours for a patient submission to the means appointed to produce the trial of his faith and trust in the Supreme Being.

"He raised his drooping head, and, looking at me with anguish, said, '*There again* do you rouse my silent sorrow! I cannot forgive the monster who hurried to a premature grave the solace, the prop of my life; for, what has been my existence without her?... This wretch was well acquainted with the circumstances of my fortune. He knew I was an honest man. I had served him in a more perilous exigence of his credit than the one I was under; and had he been a man, he would have been amongst the first of my friends to have vindicated my honour, and defended my wife from the babbling of fools, and the fears of her own too apprehensive and too tender nature.'

"He wrung his hands in speechless agony, and then proceeded: 'Had this awful dispensation of Providence met me in its ordinary

ordinary manner, I think I could with manly fortitude, and christian patience, have sustained it . . . But to be thus separated! . . . My very faith is shaken by my sorrows! . . . and I have guilt, as well as grief, to subdue me.' —He sunk into gloomy silence . . . and left me pensively to reflect on having so incautiously awakened his acute feelings. I have, my dear miss Woodley," continued the amiable Mrs. Litchford, "now to apologize for the tears I have called from your eyes, but I need no apology: they are the just tribute of humanity to a man thus sorrowing, and whose excellent life has been shaded by the idle curiosity of a child."

I shall finish this letter by telling my Eliza, that in the following year I again saw Mrs. Litchford at Mr. Baxter's, in whose family I was become an intimate. She informed me of the death of Mrs. Dormer, and the marriage of Maria. Her husband was captain of an American ship, and she left this country with him. Miss Baxter soon after married also; and on that

that event the family retired to a noble estate near Durham, and in the vicinity of that on which resided the young couple... Mr. Baxter, as a grandfather, appeared happy. And Mrs. Litchford informed me, some years after these events had taken place, that, surrounded by his affectionate children, and engaged by a rising family, he was once more the joy of his friends, and still the father and the friend of the unfortunate. Heaven grant that my Eliza, as far as her confined circle can extend, may at his age have added a similar title to the name she has derived from her mother.

ANGELICA PALMERSTONE.

LETTER III.

THE INFLUENCE OF BAD EXAMPLE,

OR THE

HISTORY OF MISS SABLE.

MY DEAR ELIZA,

You will not, I trust, suspect me of wishing to censure without solid and sufficient grounds. I am, perhaps, more gratified by your progress in that which is good and laudable than you are yourself, from being more capable of appreciating the advantages which will result to you in a future day from the improvement of the present hour. But youth and inexperience subject you to error; and from that it is my duty and my ardent wish to save you. The instant that you regard my admonitions in any other point of view than as friendly cautions intended to secure your happiness, you defeat the salutary purpose of my affectionate care; nay, you do more,

you

you convert a real and essential good into the pernicious means of fostering in your heart discontent, and ingratitude to your best and truest friend. You will insensibly become obstinate, and those indiscretions which now only demand your attention in order to correct them will become incorrigible.

Young people are naturally unsuspecting and credulous, subject to sudden impulses; and amongst the dangers to which youth and innocence are exposed, I fear we must place some to the account of these common traits of ingenuous and uncorrupted nature. It is a painful lesson for the child of simplicity to learn, that there is in the world such a thing as guile. Truth and artless confidence reject with disdain the idea of deceit and treachery: they look within their own pure abode, and they pronounce all without to be fair and good.

You passed three days in the society of miss Charlotte Standford, and you asserted that she was one of the most amiable and best disposed girls in the *whole* world. She

was

was all perfection; and you felicitated yourself on the pleasure and manifold advantages you should derive from her being your near neighbour; and you concluded by saying, "Surely, mamma, the friendship of such a young person as miss Standford is inestimable." If I mistake not, one little month only has elapsed since the date of your letter, which contained this eulogy on miss Charlotte Standford.

The last time she was with us, I became accidentally acquainted with the motives which led you to pronounce, without any qualifications whatever, miss Standford '*a very wicked girl.*' I happened to be in the summer-house when you and your *dear friend* passed under the window, which was open. She was expecting her aunt every instant, who was, as you know, to call for her in her way to Mrs. B——'s, where they still remain. You stopped exactly under the window to compose a bouquet for your favourite, and lamented in very lively terms your approaching separation. "Oh! do not

not let it vex you," cried your sprightly companion: "in the holidays my aunt will have you at the Lodge: she says that she will take no denial from Mrs. Palmerstone: we shall then have a whole month's enjoyment, and nothing to do, or to think of, but pleasure." You laughed, and said, "A week's such holidays would tire me to death; for I have been so accustomed to fill up my time, that idleness seems to me the dullest thing in the world."—"What!" asked Charlotte with vivacity, "do you never find a holiday pleasant?"—"Oh yes," answered you with *naïveté*, "when I earn one by my diligence; for then I pass more hours with my mother and grandfather in the evening."—"Well," said your giddy friend, "it is amazing to me, how you contrive to keep up your spirits under such *continual restraints: I should hate such a mother as yours.*" The roses dropped from your hand; and with honest resentment you turned to your indiscreet companion, saying, "Miss Standford, you have very much

much deceived me; I am very angry; and I shall never forget or forgive what you have said." She attempted to divert your displeasure, and said, "Nonsense!... Who but you would take offence where none was meant? If you be satisfied with being in the stocks from morning to night, it is nothing to me: I only know that I could not and would not submit." You instantly took the path to the house, observing, 'you believed that I should be waiting for you.'

I have, my dear Eliza, been thus circumstantial in my account of this scene, for two reasons: the first is, to give you the pleasure of knowing that you had, though unconsciously, given to your mother a test of your affection and principles, which filled her heart with joy and hope: the second arises from your having preferred for the confidante of your change of opinion relative to miss Standford, your *maid servant* to *your mother*.

Betty told me this morning, *as a secret*, that she fancied you and miss Charlotte had

had not parted friends; for that, after she had quitted the house, you went to your room, and Betty found you weeping; that, supposing you regretted the loss of your lively companion, she began to console you, by saying that you would soon meet again; when, to her surprise, you answered, "I hope, Betty, I shall not meet miss Standford any more. She is a very wicked, dangerous girl; and I am only astonished that I ever liked her."—"I pressed miss Palmerstone," continued the worthy girl, "to tell me what had happened: but she only said, 'Pray do not ask me any questions. I cannot bear to hear her name, nor that my mamma should know how little I understood this girl's true character.'"

I will not interrupt the course of this letter by animadverting on your reposing your confidence rather in Betty's prudence than mine. I am willing to believe that this preference arose from your delicacy, in sparing to me an evidence that I was thought, *even by a miss Charlotte Standford*, a too austere

austere and rigid governess. But my design is to examine, whether there has not entered into your prudence for me a *false shame*, and a reluctance to the confession that your judgement of miss Standford had been too hastily pronounced; and that from your sudden partiality in her favour, and as sudden dislike of her, might not arise a well-grounded suspicion that you were capricious and childish. Your self-love has taken the alarm; and you are not only displeased with Charlotte for not knowing Mrs. Palmerstone better, but also for placing Eliza Palmerstone in the humiliating predicament of being obliged to confess that she is liable to error. Yet, my beloved child, your mother tells you, that your first mistake relative to Charlotte's pretensions to your kindness is much more entitled to lenity than the latter, which so severely condemns her. It is not easy at any period of life to judge of our fellow-creatures' claims to our esteem and confidence. Appearances are always more or

less deceitful, when taken by youth and inexperience as unerring guides to conclusions which inclination directs. You were pleased with the apparent good nature and harmless gaiety of Charlotte Standford. You were won by her kindness to you, delighted by having within your reach a friend of your own age; and further stimulated by a good heart, and the incident at the cottage which so honourably bore testimony of her humanity to the poor, you pronounced her *faultless*, and "the very best girl in the world." Yielding to resentment and vexation on discovering that she was not *faultless*, you have pronounced her "a very wicked and dangerous girl." But the truth is, my Eliza, she is neither the one nor the other of these characters; but is of that class of beings to whom you and myself belong, and with whom as social beings we must live. Charlotte's cheerful good humour and heedless vivacity constitute at present her merit, and also her crime. When she said that she hated your mother,

ther, she only meant to express her aversion to restraint, and rooted dislike to those avocations which have improvement for their object. Time is necessary in order to determine our judgement in regard to this young creature's future character; but I will boldly predict, that neither a good understanding nor a good heart will secure her safety, unless she can acquire the habits of industry, and of obedience and docility to those whom God has appointed for the guides of her youth, and who, *it may be presumed*, are wiser as well as more experienced than herself.

This little incident has, however, an important lesson annexed to it, and my Eliza will, I trust, profit from it. Experience will rectify these mistakes of a youthful enthusiasm: but she is often a very severe monitress; and it not unfrequently happens, that she arrives too late to save our tranquillity and our innocence. Profit then, my child, from her lessons, under the se-

curity of a parent's love and milder instructions.

There are many people in the world who may be said to have no character at all: such will neither interest nor offend you. But there are still more from whom you ought always to hold yourself at a distance, until you have examined their opinions, their sentiments, but above all their conduct: for, incredible as it may appear to you, some will mislead you from motives of envy; others from the suggestions of a base interest; others again, from having no principles of virtue in themselves, and from having therefore ceased to respect it in their intercourse with the world around them: and multitudes are to be met with, who, from ignorance, will lead you into the paths of vice, or, from the inconsideration and levity of their own minds, will conduct yours to a servile and senseless submission to the follies of fashionable life.

Three simple rules I now offer to you; persuaded

persuaded as I am that they contain in them no contemptible preservatives for that youth and simplicity so much the object of my solicitude. I entreat you, my dear child, to consider them with attention, and carefully to retain them in your mind.

1st, Consider from whom the advice comes which claims your attention, and, it may be, meets your inclination. Are they entitled, by their age, by their situation and experience of life, by their knowledge, and the interest they ought to have in your happiness, to implicit confidence?

2dly, Is the advice given, such as, without any reluctance or concealment, you would communicate to your mother, or to any other tried and sure friend?

3dly, Is the advice given more calculated to flatter your inclinations than to repress them? and, Does it contain motives for practising the poor subterfuges of cunning, or incitements to disobedience?

Your adherence to the first of these rules, indeed I may include all, depends on your

your firmness and discretion. Remember that *ignorance* cannot guide you. With *secrecy* is always to be implied *something* wrong to conceal: and when inclination meets the counsel *to deceive*, be at once on your guard. The last caution powerfully calls upon you for all the principles of your mind; and a forgetfulness of these will conduct you to a precipice from which, perhaps, no friendly hand may be able to save you, or shelter you from the arrogant triumph of those who directed your inexperienced and deviating steps, and who will exult in your fall. But it is certain, if your life be preserved, (and we will presume to trust to Providence for its continuance,) that you will have, and that very soon, your part and your place in this mixed scene. The question ought to be, and I think will naturally arise in my Eliza's mind, What is the course that will best secure me from the snares of the wicked, and the dangers of the heedless? I answer, A decided character, built on the principles of religion, and supported

ported by a well exercised reason. With these guards you will be safe. Your conduct, not your censures, will put folly to the blush; and vice will retire from your severe, but not uncharitable, rebukes. Be prepared to encounter in your journey through life those dangers common to the children of dust: pity weakness, error and ignorance: seek in your own breast the apology these will need; remembering that you are under no other obligation *at present* than to correct your own faults: your post is not that of public or private censor.

I believe there is no better guide to the knowledge of our own characters, than that of impartially and strictly examining the motives which influence us when we yield to the temptation of exposing the foibles or condemning the moral deviations of our fellow-creatures; for of one truth we are certain: Pure and genuine virtue is gentle and forbearing: she neither heedlessly censures, nor harshly reprobates. Steady in her own allotted path, she can from afar

see

see the hapless wanderer, and with pity will recall her steps if it be possible. She knows the peril of that chart also, in which too much confidence may lead to destruction, and where too much caution and suspicion must check the courage of the adventurer, and unnerve him in a course by which alone the end and purpose of rational existence can be attained.

I send you, my beloved and still innocent girl, a little narrative, which will, I trust, inculcate more strongly than my precepts those lessons of caution; for it is a painful office, my child, to draw aside the veil which conceals from the pure of heart the defects of human conduct, to chill the unsuspecting confidence of ingenuous youth, and to strip virtue of that garland which her youthful votaries imagine must distinguish her in this world, and bloom unfaded to eternity. Alas! my child, these sanguine hopes must be disappointed: but the christian faith unfolds the future scene; and we have only to press forward and receive the recompense of well doing, by following the steps

of

of him who is our leader and our salvation, and who has prepared us to meet contradiction and offence from evil doers.

Mr. and Mrs. Sable were a very amiable and virtuous couple. They had married young; and it might be said with truth that they entered into active life at the same time: for they had till their union lived very retired, and in a part of the country very remote from London. Their parents, with more rigid prudence than good sense, had debarred them from the amusements within their reach; and to this injudicious prohibition it was probably owing that they regarded the death of their parents as somewhat like an emancipation from captivity, and thought of little with an interest equal to what they felt in the opportunity of gratifying their curiosity and taste by the pleasures of the capital. They found themselves freed from every restraint but the gentle one of mutual affection, which imposed no alloy on their sanguine and eager hopes of pleasure. They were soon esta-

blished in London, in that style and with those accommodations which an abundant fortune so easily commands every where. With false estimates of life, with imaginations warm and unchecked, with all the genuine features of uncorrupted nature, and the confidence of youth, they commenced their fashionable career. Friends multiplied daily; Mrs. Sable's parties became brilliant and numerous; the winter flew on downy wings; Bath in the spring, and Brighton in the summer, succeeded; until fashion and their friends recalled them to town. Some few years at length dispelled this delusion. Mrs. Sable's delicate health yielded to the effects of late hours and crowded apartments, and declined daily; Mr. Sable found London expensive, and his steward a stupid fellow. They discovered, what this honest man had perceived for some time, that they had wasted their fortune to please others more than themselves; that they had distinguished by the title of friends, their idle associates in amuse-

ment;

ment; that they had been pillaged by their servants, had been the dupes of fools, and the pity of the wise and respectable.

They now looked back on the safe retreat which had been the scene of their happy days, and which they had with such improvident haste quitted for balls and *private* suppers, crowded with guests whose very faces and names they were strangers to. Happily, with these convictions of their sober thoughts, they found their integrity and honour still unimpeached; and they resolved on quitting London. They mentioned their intention to their general society; and the motives of it, to such as shared their more particular confidence and domestic enjoyments. The malicious pity of the first, and the wretched and base expedients suggested by the latter, stung their sensibility to the quick, and roused to indignation the natural rectitude of their minds. All the gay and delusive ideas they had adopted of the world vanished, and made room for more sober and just impressions. But with these

these entered conclusions not less erroneous than those they had so indignantly discarded: they now persuaded themselves that there was neither truth nor friendship in the human heart, because they had not found them in the haunts of fashion, nor in the senseless round of dissipation. The death of a great-uncle at this crisis placed Mr. Sable once more at his ease in pecuniary matters. This relation he had never seen: his character was singular, and his taste romantic: with very-superior talents, he had acquired opinions which opened his heart to ambition. His career in life was honourable till he arrived at his fortieth year: but it never reached his views or hopes. Disappointed in his expectations of a post which he had long solicited, and which he had regarded as all that was necessary to his well supported claims for reputation and advancement, he retired with dignity from that he enjoyed, and, disgusted with the world, sought his paternal estate in one of the most beautiful spots in North Wales.

His

His chagrin insensibly gave place to his fancy, and he soon raised a paradise about him. The house had the simple appearance of a thatched farm; and old Mr. Stable, with scrupulous attention, gave to all that surrounded it the same modest traits. But his taste was not confined to simplicity in the decorations within the house: these were elegant; and a library that would have graced a palace was the common sitting-room of Mr. Sable. His unsocial temper, and the singular retirement of the spot, procured him the name of the Hermit, and his habitation was known by no other title than the Hermitage. He was attended by four Welch servants, and, on an annual income of five hundred pounds, grew rich without care, forgetting and forgotten. Near as the connexion of blood was, it may be presumed that the features of the two Mr. Sables' minds had also a near affinity and resemblance; for the young man determined on living as much the recluse as his uncle had done. Mrs. Sable loved her husband

band tenderly; their mutual errors had united more powerfully their hearts and their opinions.

Her health was become extremely delicate; and repose and tranquillity, whilst they renewed her strength, confirmed daily her taste for retirement, and her husband's relish for the pursuits of the garden and his little farm. They had also a blessing not overlooked in their new arrangements: to this they turned with fond delight, as the object that would banish from their retreat all that retirement has to apprehend; and they exulted in a prospect that offered them a secure shelter from the storms of life and the treachery of man, and in which their innocent child would share their safety and their peace. Caroline Sable was four years old when her parents reached the Hermitage. They had taken no servants with them: and Caroline on her arrival found that she had a new language to learn; for, except by an old woman who had for many years been housekeeper, not a word of

English

English was spoken or understood. The little Caroline soon acquired that, which cost her father and mother both time and labour; and she was highly flattered in being for a season the common interpreter to the family. Mrs. Sable now devoted her time to her child. She diligently applied every talent she possessed to the improvement of Caroline. These were by no means incompetent to the duty; and they enlarged in proportion as they were exercised. Content shed its balmy influence, renewed health invigorated the feeble frame of Mrs. Sable, and the happy husband blessed the hour that had thus insured his comforts. Seven or eight years passed tranquilly over this happy child. She grew in native simplicity and sportive ease: no temptation assailed her, no evil came near her dwelling: placid and serene, contented and cheerful, she met the kindness of her parents, in whom she saw the mild virtues which she copied.

To deceive, or to be deceived, was a lesson that

that never reached her. To succour the wretched was the recompense of her docility, and the society of her parents included in it all the pleasure and joy she coveted. The sudden death of Mrs. Sable broke down this fragile structure of happiness and security. An ulcerated sore-throat hurried this amiable woman to her grave; and Mr. Sable, yielding without resistance to the unexpected blow, was delirious and in the utmost danger. The good housekeeper, unequal to such exigences, sought the advice of the rector of a large town some miles distant from the Hermitage; with whom she had lived in her youth, and who had recommended her to old Mr. Sable. Doctor Floyde and his lady answered Mrs. Gwyn's letter in person, and by their humane attentions probably saved the unhappy father of poor Caroline.

Engaged by their goodness, and soothed by their sympathy, Mr. Sable once more opened his heart to the consolations and comforts of friendship. He solicited their society,

society, and from that time their intercourse became intimate. In the following spring Mr. Sable was prevailed upon, by the importunities of his worthy friends, to visit the continent, in order to re-establish his health, and to divert that melancholy which they saw with concern yielded but slowly to the influence of time, or to their salutary efforts. The expediency of placing Caroline in a good school was strenuously urged by Mrs. Floyde, and every advantage she might be expected to reap from such a change in her situation was placed against that absence from which her fond father shrunk. At length he reluctantly yielded; and placing his daughter in a well recommended school near London, and providing with anxious solicitude for her comforts, and even her wishes, he set out for Calais.

The kindness of the lady to whose care Caroline was consigned soon dissipated her first emotions of sorrow on losing sight of her father. The novelty of her situation diverted her mind; her companions amused her;

her; and above all, her bed-fellow sympathized with her in the frequent and secret tears she shed to the memory of her mother. Miss Parker was her *friend*, her *consolation*; and the guileless Caroline opened her whole heart to this amiable inmate. But it was to perfidy and meanness that she had consigned her honest love.

Mr. Sable had been profuse in his attentions to his darling Caroline. He had given her, with a purse liberally filled, a number of little trinkets of her mother's: and miss Parker, although not older than miss Sable, was much more cunning; she saw at once all the profits that would arise from her attaching herself to a girl who valued money only as the means of serving and obliging others, and who affixed no consequence to the trinkets, because she had her mother's picture always in her bosom. She therefore sedulously endeavoured to gain the love and gratitude of the artless Caroline; and, with these, easily drew from her several presents not inconsiderable

derable in their value. This generosity on the one hand, and the apparent design on the other, were not unobserved in the school. Combinations were hatched to destroy the influence of miss Parker, with the view of sharing in the spoils. Poor Caroline, who knew not that envy and malice, selfishness and falsehood, had their votaries of all ages, and in all conditions, repeated to her *injured* friend the cautions and the charges which the young ladies had communicated to her in order to lessen the regard and kindness that subsisted between them. She was somewhat surprised to find that miss Parker laughed at her seriousness, and braved the malice of the girls; and was utterly confounded when, on their being taxed by her friend with having spoken ill of her, she heard them with effrontery deny what they had repeatedly told her. This storm was, however, soon appeased. Miss Parker still triumphed: but her gentle and insidious influence now gave place to assumed power, and she taught poor Caroline to fear her.

The

The purse of miss Sable was not inexhaustible: she had shared her last guinea with her friend: repayment had been the condition. Absolute poverty brought this promise to Caroline's memory. She had seen the weekly fruit-and cake-basket shared, without her participation, by those who purchased its contents with her money. Miss Parker displayed, with much ostentation, a guinea that her aunt, as usual, had given her, on calling to see her; and Caroline joyfully saw her difficulties removed. She timidly reminded miss Parker of her engagement, and requested that she would pay her the half-guinea she had borrowed. Judge of the sensations of this innocent girl when she heard miss Parker firmly disown having ever received sixpence from her! The poor girl actually became faint and ill. Her indisposition, and the cause of it, instantly reached the governess's ear, who, with the most anxious attention, sought to know the truth of the matter. Unfortunately she mistook the blushes of resentment and

terror

terror for those of guilt, and poor Caroline was more than the suspected culprit. The attendant ladies of the house saw not the business in the same point of view. One of them, from whom I received this account, was perfectly acquainted with miss Parker's talents and happy address, and possessed sufficient discernment to have investigated the truth in a different way, had she had the authority. But in this instance, as in many others, the offence was better known than the offender.

It had not unfrequently happened, during this period, that the teachers referred themselves to the mild and simple Caroline for that truth which they wished to discover. They had applied to her in doubtful and ambiguous circumstances, because they were certain of sincere and unqualified truth. This might be useful to them; but it was inconvenient to miss Sable. She was upbraided by the sufferer, called a tell-tale by her school-fellows, and fell into neglect and contempt. Insensibly these consequences produced

produced their effects. She grew more circumspect, answered evasively, suppressed the truth, and at length gave up her integrity, by deviating into falsehoods in order to screen her companions from reproof and shame, and to secure to herself their kindness. What was at first their profit and security became in time her own; and she ceased to make any scruple of availing herself of those pitiful subterfuges which she once regarded as an indelible stain on that mind which for a moment could stoop to employ them. The innocence of miss Sable was now more than invaded: the first and great barrier was broken down; and she who could escape punishment by telling an untruth was not likely to avoid that misconduct which would otherwise have called for correction. I shall finish the history of her depravity with one more trait.

Amongst the assistant masters who attended the school was a poor asthmatic and deformed man. He was distinguished by his skill in drawing and writing, and not less

less for his mild and patient assiduity in the improvement of his pupils. The young ladies very ingeniously found out that this worthy man, when provoked by their impertinence, stammered, and made very diverting contortions of countenance. To make Mr. Powel stammer became the joke of the hour. Caroline's excellent nature for a long time revolted against this cruel and insulting indecorum: at length it yielded; and she enjoyed, in her turn, the supreme pleasure of wringing from industry and talents the sweetest recompense they know—namely, peace and well merited praise. The amiable lady to whom I before alluded told me that she had laboured to prevent this cruel levity; that with her remonstrances she had used arguments of the most serious weight. She informed the ladies that this unfortunate man's personal infirmities arose from his having had, at an early period of his life, a paralytic stroke; and that from thence it happened that every sudden emotion or vexation produced the effects

effects which they had noticed. She therefore entreated them to spare him in future, and to remember that his health and life depended on the composure of his mind; that he had four children to support, and had lately lost an excellent wife; which had greatly contributed to that irritation of nerves which so much excited their idle curiosity and unfeeling mirth. "I confess, madam," added the amiable young woman, when she had finished this affecting story, "I gave up miss Caroline Sable from the hour I discovered that these additional motives for consideration were lost upon her, and that she was totally unmindful of them the next time Mr. Powel attended."

At the expiration of three years Mr. Sable returned with exulting joy to meet his child, and future prop in life. She struck his admiring eyes with all the exterior charms of youth, and with all the graces of a highly-finished person. Her accomplishments announced the taste and attention of those who had superintended her education; and,

and, elate with hope, he conducted her to the Hermitage, in order to enjoy undisturbed for some time his restored treasure. But that retreat was no less changed in the eyes of Caroline, than she was become an unfit inmate of it. Her tender father saw her discontent, and eagerly sought for her those amusements within their reach. These were such as the county town afforded; and he was neither displeased nor surprised by the avidity with which she engaged in them. A young ensign whom she had occasionally danced with at the assembly became very assiduous in his attentions to the beautiful Caroline, and so troublesome a visitor to the father, that he expressed his disapprobation of him in express terms to his daughter, and not much less ambiguously to the gallant by the coldness and reserve of his behaviour. Caroline, who it is more than probable was at first attracted by the only merit he had, a genteel person and a scarlet coat, found in the disapprobation of her father a stimulus to her growing attachment; and, soon after.

she had reached her eighteenth year, left clandestinely the natural guardian of her happiness and honour to reflect alone on the deviating child of his hopes and cares. But Mr. Sable's heart was not formed for unpitying resentment. He received his penitent daughter, a widow at twenty-three years of age, with an infant at her breast, and sinking under distress and fatigue. He received her like a ministering angel, and soothed her with a *parent's* love.

"We have," said he, "both erred; and we have both suffered. In the duties we owe to this helpless being, we will mutually engage to rectify our mistakes. You will teach her what is the bitterness of that repentance which follows abandoning a parent to gratify a transient inclination, which, in most instances, derives its strength more from opposition than from any decided preference of the heart. I will, if Heaven permit, impart to her, with the examples of virtue, a knowledge of those dangers that lie in wait to surprise her." "Yes," added

he

he with emotions he could not suppress, "she shall be taught by me to understand that 'the innocence of the dove must in this world's warfare be defended by the wisdom of the serpent;' to know that vice lurks in every path, and that virtue has to combat with a host of foes. Alas! my dear Caroline, *your* guides did only half their duty: restored to peace themselves by their escape from the snares and dangers of the world, they forgot that you had your destined course through its perils. This precious child shall be made acquainted with its specious allurements and fallacious promises. Religion shall be her shield, and we will be her defence, till with steady feet she can stand the onset of passion and the attacks of sin."

The unfortunate Caroline Sable had been perverted; but the early impressions of virtue were not erased. She lived some years after her husband's decease: but her health and spirits were broken by a repentance rendered more acute by the proofs she daily

 received

received of her father's undiminished affection. She saw that his cheerfulness was often assumed; and, in his tenderness, a constant apprehension lest she should think him unhappy. The confidence resulting from undeviating duty was lost, and a secret regret poisoned poor Caroline's comforts. In her last illness she particularly recommended *miss Lexford*, the teacher in the boarding-school where she had been placed, to her father's notice, and mentioned with emotion the superior talents and experience of this young woman. "As a proof of her merit," added she, "I loved her till I was unworthy of her regard: I then feared her penetration; but never could arraign her justice, or complain of her severity." She was invited to the Hermitage immediately after Caroline's death, and had resided with Mr. Sable some years, when I accidentally met her with her pupil at a friend's house, where we passed a month with reciprocal satisfaction.

I have

I have only time this morning to recommend the little story before you to your serious attention, and remain

Your affectionate mother,

ANGELICA PALMERSTONE.

LETTER

Letter IV.

BEAUTY AND UGLINESS,

OR

THE SICK CHILD.

MY DEAR ELIZA,

The other day, when Mrs. Maitland and her daughter left us, you remarked, in a tone of pity and much good will, how sorry you were to see miss Maitland so much altered for the worse in her person: "I think," added you, "she is one of the plainest girls I ever saw. Do you not think her unfortunate with respect to her outward appearance?—I am afraid she will be very crooked."—I replied, 'that I had not perceived any ground for that fear,' and, what was more, dissented from your general opinion relative to her person. Although I allowed 'that she had neither regularity of features, nor a good complexion, yet I maintained that her countenance had in it an animation and

and a character extremely prepossessing, and which perfectly agreed with the accounts I had heard of her amiable temper and good sense; and that it would not surprise me to see her, at eighteen, pleasing in regard to her person, and the accomplished young woman Mrs. Maitland was so amply qualified to render her.' Whilst waiting for your reply, I saw you absorbed in contemplating an image reflected from a mirror opposite to you, and which, to say the truth, exhibited more of the graces of nature than the face or person of miss Maitland. Your music-master interrupted your reverie, and prevented my comments on the subject of it. And yet, my child, the reflections it awakened in my mind were not less important and serious than yours were flattering and complacent.

We will now examine the ground on which rest our opposite sentiments, and inquire into the reasons which have lessened my admiration of a beautiful person. Amongst others, I can produce one which will diminish the

the value of this prerogative, even in your estimation; for I will prove to you, that the woman whom above all others you think charming, and call fascinating, is one of the plainest in person and features of any who visit me. What think you of your favourite and "dear Mrs. Beaumont?" Have you ever critically examined the defects of her shape, or remarked her sallow complexion, unaided as it is but by her fine intelligent black eyes? Has the irregularity of her features never drawn from you the pity and compassion miss Maitland excited so powerfully in your mind? I see your surprise, and the dissent of your judgement from mine. For you do not think Mrs. Beaumont an ugly woman, though not a beautiful one; and you cannot admit that this lady answers to my description: but be assured, no one who looks at Mrs. Beaumont with attention will deny the resemblance; and by strangers she is constantly regarded as a *very plain* woman. You have lived in the habit of seeing her every day.

She

She has, by her winning sweetness and cheerfulness, gained your heart. She has imposed upon you, Eliza, as she does on all who know her: for she exhibits virtue and the graces; and by these subdues all hearts, and enchants all eyes. You have seen miss Maitland only once during the two last years: when you have seen and conversed with her for two or three months, we will decide on her defects and pretensions.

We will next turn our eyes on an *acknowledged beauty*. What do you think of Mrs. Watkins? I cannot now be mistaken in my example; for you have not forgotten the impression she made on you last year, when she entered my drawing-room as a bride. The circle was large; and every one rose to receive the "celebrated beauty:" all eyes gazed on her with delight, and yours were of the number. Curiosity and admiration suspended, for a time, the considerations of politeness; and each gentleman forgot that, in this tribute to her charms, he might wound her delicacy, and

offend her good sense. She has since that time been a frequent visitor here, and with the same society. She is, if it be possible, more beautiful; and yet we are all quiet when she enters, and at our ease when she departs. To what cause is it owing that Mrs. Watkins has now so few occasions of censuring that admiration, once so distressing and embarrassing to her modesty? Shall I tell you? or will you tell me? We have *seen* her as often as we wish: you keep your station at Mrs. Beaumont's elbow, and I content myself with arranging her card-table as soon as possible. We have gratified our curiosity; we are weary of *looking*, and seek amusement elsewhere. But be not deceived: it is not altogether to the cold *insipidity* of this lady that you are to attribute this effect: there is another cause which acts independently of *this*, and which never fails to weaken the impressions of beauty, as well as of deformity. All that is familiar to the senses ceases to be the object of admiration, or disgust; and for this rea-

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son is it that we are so often the dupes of novelty, and the slaves of whim and fashion. Let us then consider Mrs. Watkins as merely a beautiful object. Under this point of view, she resembles a fine painting, which every one approaches with curiosity and pleasure. A few examinations of it gratify the one, and lessen the other; but it still obtrudes, and we begin to assume the province of critics, perhaps with the sole view of repaying to our self-love that homage it had been surprised into in favour of another. Be this as it may, the piece is now judged defective; it wants colouring; it is overcharged; and the contour is stiff and unnatural. These censures have their day, and in a little time even this interest sinks: we neither look at it nor talk of it, and it is equally forgotten with our family portraits—consigned to an apartment which we never enter.

Mrs. Beaumont has none of the attractions of beauty: her person is as defective as her face; she neither excites emotion, nor calls forth

forth any curiosity. The eye of the stranger passes in an instant in search of a more pleasing object. Chance places him near her: he is struck with the sound of a voice harmonized by nature, and expressing, in correspondent tones, the quick and varied ideas of a lively and correct imagination: he listens to her language; he hears the sprightly sallies of her wit, chastened by modesty and checked by good nature: he draws nearer, and finds himself mixed with the grave and the gay, with the young and the old, whom she has attracted around her; and, forgetting his first impressions, he is only solicitous concerning his future admission to a place which merit embellishes, and in which his taste will be gratified.

I do not think Mrs. Beaumont would gain a single advantage by having the shape and face of a *Mrs. Watkins*. The ascendency she now has over our understandings and our hearts would be rather weakened than increased by her being beautiful: we might suspect that we were deceived by our senses,

senses, rather than subdued by a merit which reflects honour on those who are capable of appreciating its worth.

I believe I have never informed you of the circumstances which first connected me with this amiable woman, whose friendship I regard as one of the peculiar blessings of my life, and whose partiality I account as the most flattering distinction of my fortune.

I accompanied my mother, two or three years before I married, to Matlock. As you saw this beautiful spot last summer, in your way to Buxton, I shall forbear to say more of it, than that your grandmother, like yourself, preferred the house called the Temple to the one below it called the Hall. We accordingly had our apartments there: the declining state of my mother's health rendered this more quiet abode necessary, but by no means excluded, in her indulgent consideration of me, the amusements of the general rendezvous. We dined in the public

lic room, frequently took our tea there, and returned to the Temple in the evening.

It happened, soon after our arrival, that I found placed at my side a little girl whom I had not seen before. She was short and clumsy, ill-dressed, and wore a large straw bonnet which almost concealed her face: this, however, I observed was pale and sickly, and she had an inflammation in her eyes which demanded the precautions adopted. She appeared intimidated, and even distressed, by the novelty of her situation; and I was naturally led to look for the party under whose protection she was, and by whom she was so apparently neglected. A lady opposite to me soon gave me the information I searched, by saying aloud, "Nancy, take care you do not eat too much." This precaution I thought as harsh as it was useless; for poor Nancy had not swallowed one morsel, and was only on the point of tasting some bread pudding, which I had recommended and encouraged her to take

take on her plate. She looked dismayed, hung down her head still lower, and crossed her knife and fork. Unable to divert a confusion that touched me, I turned my attention to the cause of it. A very gay and handsome woman, who, as I suspected, was the mother of poor Nancy, was so deeply engaged by a military beau on the one hand, and a young lady on the other, as to have no time to observe the confusion and embarrassment of her daughter, or to repeat an injunction which appeared to arise from habit rather than tender attention.

Day after day Nancy and myself kept our stations; we became sociable; and I was pleased with my new acquaintance. The mother had learned our name; she made me some little compliment on my attentions to her daughter, and added, she had reason to believe that Nancy's aunt was of the number of Mrs. Woodley's intimate friends. She was not mistaken; the lady in question, Mrs. Johnson, having been long one whom my mother particularly

larly esteemed. She was a single woman, and very rich. Her nephew, the father of Nancy, had offended her by his marriage; and little intercourse had subsisted between him and his good aunt from that period. The connexion, however, produced something like acquaintance between his lady and ourselves; and she availed herself of it, and my growing kindness for her neglected child, to beg I would attend to what she ate at table; saying, she was just recovered from the measles, that the disorder had left an inflammation in her eyes, which had been extremely alarming, and which still required much caution and care; and that Nancy was very inattentive. I listened with disgust to cautions and cares thus recommended by a mother who was capable of employing the agency of another in her own duty; but I was not unmindful of my charge. My gentle and good mother shared these sentiments with me, and, by the numberless proofs of her regard and kindness, won the poor child's gratitude, and

and banished her bashful constrained behaviour. She followed us like our shadow, and appeared to look up to us for her enjoyments. I soon thought there was some reason for the caution respecting Nancy's *eating*; and, as the mother had thought proper to devolve this care on me, I was doubly attentive; judging it of importance to her general health, and peculiarly necessary for her eyes, which remained still in a bad state. From the avidity with which my young friend asked for tongue, slices of cold ham, tarts, &c. &c., as well as the dispatch with which they disappeared, I began to suspect that she pocketed them, in order to regale herself in secret; knowing that her mother did not allow her to eat any supper. On one of these occasions, I whispered in her ear that *chicken* was better for her than ham or pastry, placing the wing of a fowl on her plate. She received my admonition with perfect good humour, and began to eat what was before her. At that instant a servant, whom she had commissioned, brought her

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the ham. In passing it he slightly touched my shoulder. I turned, and saw Nancy with great adroitness convey it to her lap. The self-command she assumed convinced me it was done with design, and I was persuaded that this child indemnified herself for her remarkable moderation at the table, by being a glutton in private. I consequently became vigilant for a day or two, not willing to distress her by my remonstrances without necessity. I found that she constantly preferred cold things, little tarts, cheese-cakes, in a word, whatever was easiest to conceal in her handkerchief; and that after dinner she disappeared for some time. There was a mystery in all this which I could not unfold. Chance however effected what my ingenuity could not.

My mother met at the Hall a family we were acquainted with: they were on their road to Buxton, and meant only to pass a day or two at Matlock. They induced us to pass the day at the Hall, and after dinner my mother and her friends made a party at whist;

whist; and I went to the Temple for my work-bag. The day was extremely sultry, and I slowly sauntered to the house. Before me I saw Nancy running with the utmost speed: she ascended a narrow path in the rock, and I lost sight of her. On entering my room, I went to the window which I knew must command the road she had taken, and again I saw the fugitive panting and pressing forward. She had a small covered basket on her arm, which she was obliged to place on the ground from time to time in order to secure her feet. I immediately conceived she had reasons for choosing this perilous and fatiguing road, in preference to one, easier and shorter, by the Temple; and I was certain of meeting her by pursuing it. I forgot, in an instant, the heat by which I had been oppressed, and set out. Again I caught a glance of her, and again I lost sight of her, but still followed the chase; and turning into a beaten path, which communicated with the high road, I saw her before me. But judge of my astonishment, when

when I relate her situation and employment! She was on her knees before a sick, squalid, and shocking-looking child of her own age, who was sitting in an old wicker chair by the door of a half-fallen cottage. She appeared helpless; her face bore the recent ravages of the small-pox, and she was blind. I stopped a few paces from them. Nancy's bonnet was hanging at her back, and held there by the ribband which tied it; her face and eyes were exposed to the vivid rays of the western sun; whilst she, unmindful of all, was catering from the basket the dainties with which she fed the poor girl, who, to say the truth, devoured them with the avidity of one half famished. "I am glad," said Nancy, rising at length from her uneasy posture, and wiping with her frock the scalding tears that ran from the girl's eyes—"I am rejoiced that you have enough to-day; I hope you will not want any thing now, till your mother returns. But give me the jug, I will fetch you some water, and then run home."

She

She turned and saw me: some apples she held in her hand fell to the ground, and she stood mute and confounded before me. "Wherefore are you *here*, my love, alone?" demanded I with mildness: "and why so forgetful of your own eyes?" placing the useless bonnet on her head.—"Oh!" cried she, bursting into tears: "do not tell my mamma, she will never forgive me: you shall know all: only let me speak five words to this poor girl. She is not to blame: indeed, indeed it is all my own fault! Let me only comfort her once more, and then I will go home with you, and you shall know every thing." She turned to the frightened child: "Do not be afraid," sobbed she, "it is only miss Woodley: she would not harm a worm. But I cannot come any more: you will die with hunger! and I cannot help it." She hung on the girl's neck, and wept bitterly. I soothed her, and quieted the clamours of the child, by promising her that she should not be neglected: and we took the road to the Temple.

I dispatched

I dispatched a servant with a note to my mother, and gave notice to Mrs. Seymour, that Nancy would pass the evening with me; that we had imprudently walked, and had both gotten the head-ach.

Nancy soon entered upon her story, and her *justification*. "You shall hear every thing, my dear Angelica," said she, fondly embracing me: "for you are the only friend I have, and the only one who would love and pity such a girl as I am."—"In the name of wonder," exclaimed I, not comprehending her meaning, "what is it that you have been guilty of?"—"Why," answered she, "it is now more than three weeks since my mamma went with a party to see Chatsworth; major O'Brien drove her in his phaeton. My mamma thought the dust and light would hurt my eyes, so she did not take me. As soon as the party had left the Hall, Hollins, our maid, began to scold me: she said I was always in every one's way, and that, but for me, she could have gone on the water with her acquaintance.

I cried,

I cried, and told her, I was very sorry for her disappointment; but that I could not help it. 'No,' replied she, somewhat kinder; 'I know that: but some other people could;' and she muttered something I did not understand, about my mamma, and her being ashamed of me: adding, if I was not so handsome as some people, I was better tempered, and she was sure that I would oblige her.—'Most willingly,' replied I, pleased to see her good-humoured.—'Well, then, my dear miss Nancy,' said she, 'you must stay in this room all the day, and lock yourself in: my friends are waiting for me at Crumford. I will fetch you something very nice for your dinner, and lend you my Fairy Tales to read; but you must not stir till I return, nor ever tell your mamma.' I promised to be faithful, and she left me in haste—not however before she had provided me with all that I might want. I read till the last dinner-bell sounded; but my eyes watered and smarted, and I amused myself

myself with observing the company enter the house.

"The thought then came into my head that I should like to eat my dinner in the wood. Hollins had left it in this *very basket*, and I took it in my hand, and stole to the wood: but recollecting that the ladies and gentlemen often came thither to walk after dinner, I was afraid of being seen, and, instantly quitting it, took by chance this road, and, to be more concealed, the path which conducted you to the cottage. The sick child was sitting at the door, as you found her; and I thought she looked as if she had no one to love her, or to pity her: so I asked her whether she should like some fruit, offering her that I had in my basket. But, my dear Angelica, she was, as you saw, blind, and more unfortunate than myself! besides that one of her poor hands is shrunk and useless, from her having fallen into the fire. She was hungry and dry; and told me that her parents left her every day, to work at some

some lead-mines three miles from home, and that she had nothing to eat till they returned. I gave her," continued the amiable creature, "all my dinner. Oh! my dear miss Woodley, had you seen her eat it, your gentle heart would have melted! She devoured it like a hungry dog . . . You do not blame me, do you?" said she, looking anxiously in my face: "but I promised to come to her as often as I could, and to bring her food. Fortunately I regained my room unobserved; Hollins returned before my mamma, and my secret is known only to you.

"I did not dare to mention my poor starving girl.

"The next morning, seeing the ladies and gentlemen giving whole buttered muffins to their dogs, with slices of ham, and other dainties, I thought of the sick girl, and resolved to take in my turn a little from the dinner to feed her. My mamma always plays at cards till the evening is cool, and Hollins stays whole hours in the servants'

hall; and during that time I run to the cottage, by a nearer road than the one you came; and I have never been found out, for the walks are always empty."—"But," said I gravely, "has it never occurred to you, that you were giving what was not yours to give? Evil is not to be committed even for a good purpose."—"Oh, yes," answered she; "I well knew where you would begin to chide, for I knew that was wrong...But what conld I do?...*She* was not a dog....I was not then so much in your favour as I have been since. Besides, I was afraid you would not let me run so far in the heat of the day, and in the sun-shine. What could I do?" repeated she sorrowfully. "I always spared her all the nice things I could have eaten myself; and was it not hard for this poor *ugly* child to want food? No one notices her; you saw how frightful her face is; and ugly children, you know"... she paused ..then sobbed..."are not loved." Her tears flowed, and she stopped again. "How has it happened, my dear miss Angelica,"

gelica," resumed she, fondly caressing me, "that you, who are so beautiful, and so admired here, have never reproached me for being so very very clumsy and disagreeable? I would give any thing in the world to be as pretty as my brothers, for then mamma would love me as much as she does them. But what can I do? I cannot help being ugly, you know." She could not proceed. I saw with unequivocal indignation the sorrow which the cruelty and folly of her mother had planted in her innocent bosom; and with fervour yielding to my compassion, I said, embracing her tenderly, "You are more lovely, and more beautiful, in your work of mercy, than the most finished form or fairest face could render you. The wise and the good will love and praise you, and God Almighty will approve and bless you."—"Ah!" said she transported, "now I am again convinced that I have been very foolish; for I never looked in your face without thinking you would be good to the

poor girl; and twenty and twenty times, when you showed me so much kindness, I was tempted to lead you to her." We now settled the business. Nancy joyfully committed her protégée to my future cares, and promised to eat her dinner.

In the cool of the evening we returned to the cottage. The mother of the girl was at home, and I learned from her that extreme poverty forced her to leave her child. She said the neighbours were few and remote; and that since the small-pox had been in her house no one came near it, nor could she prevail on any to take care of the girl during her absence; that, on leaving her for the day, she fed her, and, thinking the air was good for her, left her at the door; as she was able, in case of need, to crawl on her hands and knees to shelter. "But, madam," added the woman, "she has, I am told, worms; for she is always craving for food." Good and plentiful nourishment soon removed the good woman's fears relative to the worms; clean and warm cloth-

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ing renovated her feeble frame; she recovered her sight; and I left her as a boarder with an honest old woman who taught reading, spinning, and knitting; and who, notwithstanding the lame hand, which was thought to be past relief, also engaged to teach her to knit. My mother became a sharer in our secret, and the principal agent in all these designs. Nancy was not even suspected; and I escaped all questions.

On our return to town my mother failed not to communicate to her friend Mrs. Rebecca Johnson this anecdote of her niece, with such traits of her character as had much pleased and interested her. She by no means spared the mother of this engaging creature; for, in my mother's judgement, few errors merited more reprehension or severity. Mrs. Seymour by her neglect, not to say dislike, of this innocent and unoffending child, had no advocate in a breast in which the hardest and most pressing duties of a mother were constantly regarded as the inlets of delight.

Mrs.

Mrs. Johnson entered with the most lively interest into the detail. She said that she had, for many years of her life, considered Mr. Seymour as a son; and that she had looked forward to him as the prop of her declining days, "His character and conduct," pursued she, "warranted these hopes, until I opposed his union with a woman undeserving of him. He knew that I had neither interest nor prejudice for my government; and he was displeased that I had not for his choice the same complaisance to which his own reason submitted. The convictions it has since forced upon him have insensibly operated still more to remove us from each other. He retired into the country, and there buried his distinguished talents, and his chagrin. But I know the excellence of his nature, and I pity him: I am sure that he suffers more from being the witness of the injustice you have observed, than even from the levity which disgraces him in his own eyes as a husband. It shall be his own fault if he be not relieved

from

from this sorrow at least. I will be the mother of this unfortunate child: I will love her, as I have loved, and still do love, her unhappy father, who must remain an example of that misery which a blind and self-willed passion can produce. This girl is the eldest of three children: the two boys are, I am told, very beautiful; of course they will enjoy the favour of their foolish mother till my nephew provides for their safety by removing them out of her hands; and his daughter shall have no claims on that fortune which is so amply adequate to their education and future establishment."

Mrs. Johnson immediately made her proposals; and the nephew, with joy, met a reconciliation so consonant to his interest and wishes. He acceded with gratitude to her generous conditions; and Mrs. Seymour did not even affect a regret, which, as a parent, she ought to have blushed not to have felt. She said the aunt and the niece would keep each other in countenance, for they were perfect resemblances. Mrs. Johnson's

son's London friends entirely agreed in respect to the precision of Mrs. Seymour's judgement on this point. It had not occurred to my mother or myself, till health had animated Nancy's features. Be it as it might, certain it is, no compliment was more acceptable to the good aunt than remarking this likeness.

When my favourite had nearly reached her sixteenth year, her person was considerably improved, her shape having been, till then, defective. I remarked one day to the aunt this visible and advantageous alteration, and prognosticated that she would, after all, turn out a pleasing person. "No," answered Mrs. Johnson, "she will neither be handsome nor genteel; for she will want height and complexion; but, nevertheless, she will please, my dear Mrs. Palmerstone, even to satisfy your partial hopes. The endowments of her heart and mind will make her irresistible, with those who stop not at the surface. I shall not, it is probable, live to see her married; but remember what

what I now predict to you. If Nancy Seymour ever be so fortunate as to attract the notice and esteem of a man of sense and merit, he will be her captive for life. She will be overlooked in a crowd; she will be disregarded by fools: but let merit and worth beware; they will with difficulty escape her. Her train of admirers will be friends, and friends for life."

Two or three years before Mrs. Johnson's death, Mr. Beaumont became intimate in the family. He is eight or ten years older than my friend. His penetrative eye soon discovered the gem in the unadorned casket: he saw its mild emanations in the artless and playful imagination of ingenuous youth; he saw it shine in uniform sweetness of disposition, and in undisguised frankness and candour; he saw it beam in full splendour at the side of Mrs. Johnson's sick couch, which for months the niece attended, and converted to that of repose and triumph. Mrs. Johnson had the happiness to see her beloved pupil the wife of Mr. Beaumont,

six or eight months before she died,—and from the day she bestowed this blessing upon him appeared to have no wish ungratified. Her donation to her niece was as unlimited as her affection: she gave her all her fortune.

Some time since my friend was indisposed. As I perceived no cause for alarm, and every reason to hope she would soon recover, I was qualified for the comforter of her terrified husband. In one of my daily visits, I found him in his wife's dressing-room under the greatest depression of spirits. He told me with tears that Mrs. Beaumont was worse than I suspected; that she had fainted the evening before; and that he had prevailed upon her not to quit her bed. "You will see her," continued he, "and let me know the worst. I must not be deceived." I entered the bed-chamber of my friend with some alarm. "Oh!" cried she, "you are come! . . . I rejoice to see you! . . . . . Do you know that I am under solitary confinement; and that, if I had resisted, Beaumont would

would have ordered the strait waistcoat! . . . I talked and rattled so much last night, that with the heat of the apartment, which they had contrived to make as close as an oven, I became faint, and retired hither to recover myself: this the change of air effected instantly, and I returned to my post on the sofa, in hopes of having eluded the vigilance of my keeper. But, simpleton as I was, I fainted again like a tragedy heroine, and only found myself out when in my bed; in which he implores me to remain, as though my life depended on my compliance. Go, and make him more reasonable, for I really find myself well."

As she did not impose either on herself or me, I acquiesced in her desire to rise; and, leaving her for that purpose, returned to gladden the desponding husband; who, trusting to my judgement of a change of room being salutary for the invalid, and satisfied that his fears had been premature, resumed his usual cheerfulness.

I now rallied him, and laughing said, I should

should begin to fancy he was under the influence of a particular degree of fate; for that I had heard his extreme attachment to his wife predicted, even before he had seen her. I finished by repeating to him Mrs. Johnson's words, and the conversation which had introduced them. Mr. Beaumont eagerly pursued the pleasing subject, until interrupted by the entrance of his wife, who with much pleasantry upbraided him with his despotism. He fondly repeated what I had been saying, adding, "his stars were more in fault than he." She smiled, and, turning to me with her bewitching grace, said with assumed gravity, "Was this well done, Angelica? 'The ignorant are happy still,' says some author who had nothing better to say. But is it well done to show the captive those chains from which death only can relieve him?—Since, however, he is informed of his wretched doom, I will let him into all the secret—he shall see the spells and incantations which have rendered me an agent in the deep and dark designs of fate." She disappeared, and

and in a few moments returned with the identical straw bonnet she wore at Matlock, and which was not embellished by time. The air of solemnity she assumed, as I conceived for her own whimsical purpose, and the white wrapping-gown she wore, perfectly suited the metamorphosis, and Mr. Beaumont and myself laughed heartily at her droll appearance.

"This talisman," said she to her husband, taking it from her head, "was known by my revered aunt; but it was not her gift. It was furnished by the severe commands of harsh authority, who imposed it on me with other burthens. Virtue saw me sinking under their oppressive weight—she lightened them—she taught me to convert this mark of cold indifference into a memorial of gratitude, and into an incitement to goodness. She called around her her attendant Graces, and bade me admire real loveliness and beauty; then, breathing on that bonnet, commanded me to read the talisman within, and, placing it on my head, bade me rule all hearts.

hearts. Read," said she to her husband, who held it. He obeyed . . . and read aloud, 'You are more lovely and more beautiful in your work of mercy than the most finished form or fairest face could make you. The wise and the good will praise and love you, and God Almighty will approve and bless you.'—"I have," pursued she, "religiously preserved this favour of my tutelary angel. She has not deceived me; for truth resides with her. The good and the wise," added she with emotion, her eyes swimming in tears, "do praise and cherish me; and my gracious Creator has blessed me in the first connexions of human felicity as a social being. He has given to me the heart of my husband, and a sure guide for my journey through life. He has given me a friend, from whose example I have endeavoured to merit this most precious of his gifts."—— She took my hand. "Why do you blush, Angelica?" said she with renewed gaiety. "This poor man is now to be fully undeceived. You may perceive he sees nothing

but

but magic in all this business. But look at that portrait," presenting to her husband my picture in miniature: "there is the sorceress; and these are the places of her incantations," unrolling some beautiful drawings in water-colours, of the cottage-scene, our interview at the Temple, and several other landscapes in which we had had our share.

I was confused, and threatened to send her to her late confinement again. She laughed at my threats, but bade me take courage, for that she would tell her husband the whole story at her own time, and in her own way: "and that," added she, "is not now, for you would spoil it."

I found that her last summer's ramble to Matlock was expressly taken to have views of those particular spots which had been impressed on her susceptible heart. She informed me that our poor girl held the high office of school-dame to a score of chubby-faced boys and girls. "But," added she, "I have not been well used *there*. My rights, if they have not been invaded, have been interfered

interfered with; for the grateful creature told me she had always divided with her father and mother the occasional twenty pounds which I sent, as she supposed I intended; for that the ten pounds per annum regularly remitted to her, was sufficient to supply all her wants.

"But the sorceress," looking at me, "must account for those extraordinary donations. However," continued she, "I am placable; and as a proof of it, tell Eliza that I will lend her my bonnet whenever *she wants it*, and these drawings to copy whenever she pleases."

I know not, my dear Eliza, precisely, what may be your application of this subject. You are undoubtedly a very pretty girl; nay more, if it please you, I will call you *a very beautiful one*. You will soon hear this simple and unimportant truth conveyed to you, with all the exaggerations of folly, deceit, and senseless gallantry. If your ambition will be satisfied by a distinction so incidental, and which is liable to numberless

morti-

mortifications and sinister accidents, your glass will insure to you, and I will confirm its decision, the triumphs of beauty. You will attract notice, and excite envy, by the lustre of your eyes and the dazzling whiteness of your skin; but I can hardly prevail on myself, even for a moment, to suspect that the understanding of my child will be contented with a pre-eminence raised on such a slight and weak foundation. I think it would disdain so poor a praise, and nobly assert its claims to a better and a more permanent one; nor should I be surprised that you entered into the spirit of a very beautiful young woman whom I formerly knew.

She had been teased with the silly jargon of offensive praise, the greater part of the evening, by a young man who imagined he was effectually making his court to her. At length, weary of his assiduities and fulsome compliments, she said with arch humility, "You have, sir, been very condescending in remarking with such elaborate praise my face and shape; you have certainly given

given to them a value they had not before. I wish you to know all the advantages which I owe to nature, in order that you may also teach me to appreciate them properly."

The beau protested, that in such a blaze of beauty it was not possible to discriminate, but begged to hear what had escaped him. "Why," replied she, "you might have seen that I had an excellent appetite at dinner; and I do assure you that I walk daily without fatigue five or six miles, and sleep soundly every night." The gentleman was silenced; and six months after I heard him criticize, with merciless severity, this young lady's face and shape.

Refuse then this silly bait, whether it be the offering of self-love or that of the world. Aim at something more worthy of you; and, in the mean time, cultivate those graces of the heart and the mind, which will flourish in old age, which will dignify exterior deformity, and shelter sickness and disease from disgust and neglect. Be lovely; be

be beautiful: but be *so*, in all the wisdom of holiness, and in that purity of heart which faileth not in this life, nor in that which is to come.

Yours ever,

ANGELICA PALMERSTONE.

LETTER V.

FAMILY DISCORD,

OR THE

HISTORY OF EDWARD AND HENRY.

I SIT down this morning in order to congratulate you, my dear Eliza, on your having taking possession of your own peaceable apartment, after the late noisy and turbulent visit you have been engaged in at admiral G——'s.

The alacrity with which you quitted your new acquaintances, and the solicitude you discovered lest your grandfather should prolong his stay, sufficiently indicated to me the little enjoyment you had in a scene of petty quarrels and obstinate contentions. It may not, however, be amiss to consider, my dear child, from whence arises your particular dislike of the conduct of the young people with whom you have so lately

lately passed three weeks; and to examine the motives which governed your mind when you expressed, in such strong terms, your disgust and abhorrence of wrangling, in your account of some scenes that had passed at the Grove.

You will do well to reflect on your peculiar situation in life. Without a competitor for the favour of your parents; without a rival in your nursery; cherished by a widowed mother, whose pleasures and hopes centre in you; trained in the habits of docility; treated with complacence by all around you; and finally sheltered from every example of pernicious tendency; is it wonderful, that at fourteen years of age you should not only shrink from a view of the irritable passions, but exhibit all the graces of mildness and a good temper? But, my dear child, if you cannot find more stable grounds for the opposition which now subsists between your character and that of the young people you have lately quitted, you have little whereon to rest your security,

or

or to justify your censures: for it is only in a firm conviction of that duty which we owe to God, and of the obligations we are under to live in peace with our fellow-creatures, that we can find a solid basis on which to found our pretensions to the virtues of patience and forbearance; or the security that they will not fail us in the conflicts of human passion and human interest. It is not the absence of evil which constitutes goodness, although the mind in this state is, like the well prepared field of the husbandman, ready for the precious deposit destined for it, and from which, when sown, he may with confidence expect to reap tenfold. It will be, like the field of the sluggard, barren, if, when the soil is prepared, the labourer desist from his toil, saying, "The ground is now clean; it is levelled for the wholesome dews of heaven; it is fenced from being trodden down: let us wait and see the natural produce: it may be, it will repay us for our labour by its spontaneous fruits." Ought he to be surprised that he saw not the

the rich and golden harvest waving to his expecting eyes? Ought he to murmur if, with the luxuriant productions of nature, he saw noxious weeds and useless flowers? And would he not, when the season was past, regret that he had not finished his labour by those means which alone could insure to him the recompense of it? Endeavour then, my child, to reap a more solid advantage than that which negative goodness is able to yield. Look into the character of your mind, and with attention fix in it those principles of action which will establish it in worth, in usefulness, and in increasing excellence. Bless that Providence which by its merciful interposition has prepared you for the duties it demands. The field is ready, my Eliza: it bears at present no baleful weed; it is fenced from the blights of poverty, and the incursions of all enemies. But it now asks for that seed which will spring up tenfold, and with glory. Thus prepared, I think you will be disposed to read with advantage the history of the young people you

you have lately visited; and the disgust, I may say aversion, which you have so openly manifested, will be changed to compassion.

My father and admiral G—— have been intimate friends for many years, and I have frequently had the satisfaction of sharing their occasional meetings in town; in which I constantly remarked somewhat more cordial and reciprocal than is commonly found in the cold and hackneyed intercourse of the world. The admiral's employments and activity rarely however permitted him to stay long with us, and his visits were rather hasty calls than social meetings. I knew that his lady was many years younger than himself, that she had an increasing family, and resided altogether in the country. The death of this lady, and the absence of her husband, carried us down to the Grove; your grandfather being appointed by the admiral to regulate his affairs during his expected long absence and perilous cruize. It is probable the admiral, in these prudent arrangements

arrangements for the benefit of his children, considered the declining state of his lady's health as a serious argument for the necessity of them, and he wisely prepared for the event which has since taken place.

When Mrs. Chandler, the admiral's sister, informed your grandfather of Mrs. G——'s death, she solicited me to accompany him to the Grove, by such arguments as were unanswerable; and thus we became her guests, and the witnesses of those faults she is called upon to correct.

Two or three days after our arrival, I was reading alone in the dressing-room appropriated to my use, when Mrs. Chandler tapped at the door and begged admittance. "Are you particularly engaged?" said she on entering and observing the book open on the table. "By no means," replied I, conducting her to a seat: "I was only amusing a leisure hour."—"I am glad of it," said she; "for I long, my dear Mrs. Palmerstone, to open my heart to you. Mr. Palmerstone has, in the accounts which

I have placed before him, full employment for the morning; and I wish to consult with you on business much more important to my dear brother than the most pressing of his pecuniary affairs. Shall I not be too importunate?" I assured her of my attention, and the interest I took in whatever related to the admiral; and she began as follows:

"You will be surprised, madam, to hear, that till within a few weeks I was as much a stranger in this house as yourself. I wish in the first place to account for this estrangement from a brother who is the pride of my life. The admiral, in selecting his lady as his future wife, wished for my concurrence in a choice which, perhaps, rendered his good sense doubtful in some points. She was some years younger than himself, and had been one of my companions. From a school-girl I loved her; but I understood her character, and I knew that neither education nor nature qualified her for the wife of a man in my brother's situation. She

She was deficient in that steadiness of mind so indispensable in an union of disproportionate ages: and she was, moreover, extremely captious, and somewhat fretful in her temper. I loved my brother, and, although aware of the consequences, sacrificed my interest with him by openly stating my objections to the lady. As I expected, the marriage soon followed; and I became a stranger in the family, and a solitary being in a world in which I had few connexions independent of my brother.

"I married in the following year, with the consent of that brother, who had not forgotten in his desertion of a sister that he stood in the relation of a father to her. I followed my husband to Oporto. During my residence there I saw my brother several times, and with pleasure perceived that every shadow of offence was worn out of his mind. He was happy under our roof, and we only regretted the parting hour. A formal compliment on the part of his wife, and general intelligence respecting his

 children,

children, bounded his confidence, and checked our inquiries. A visit to England was never proposed by him, nor thought of by myself. Happy in my own domestic blessings, and content with my brother's kindness, I experienced little inclination for a reunion with a woman, who had convinced me that she had totally misinterpreted the motives of my conduct.

"On the death of my worthy husband I returned to my native country, and about three years ago settled at Gloucester, the place of my birth, and in the kindness of my early friends endeavoured to forget that I had once been happier. On my arrival, my brother, who was then at the Grove, paid me a visit. He entered with the most affectionate concern into my change of circumstances, spoke of my husband with the warmest regard, and seemed happy in the affluence he had bequeathed to his widow. On leaving me, after a week's visit, an air of sadness and constraint visibly appeared on his manly and open countenance. He spoke of his wife's bad health, but stopped

stopped irresolute... His hesitation included an apology which I perfectly understood; and whilst I pitied him for a reserve so opposite to his nature, I loved him for a heart which disdained to concur with it.

"Before he last sailed from England he wrote me an affectionate letter, pleading the hurry of his affairs for not coming to see me. Some time after his departure I was summoned to the Hot Wells at Bristol by my sister's woman.... 'Her mistress was there, and in a dying condition.' I set out instantly, and found the servant had not magnified the danger. The physicians had lost all hopes of her recovery, and her dissolution was rapidly approaching. She lived, however, three weeks after I joined her.

"You will not be surprised, my dear madam, that in these moments of solemn appeal to the human heart my sister forgot her late prejudices against me, or remembered them only to regret them. She implored my kindness and attention to her children; and directed me to apply to your father,

madam,

madam, for instructions and advice, as soon as they became necessary. I have availed myself of these, and I will religiously perform my promise in regard to the children. After the funeral I proceeded hither.

"I had been prepared by my poor sister to expect much irregularity in her domestic concerns. Her health had long been unequal to the cares of a family. The children, she gave me to understand, had also suffered from the same cause; and my first business here was *observation*.

"The eldest boy, Edward, is now near fourteen. Henry is a year younger than his brother. The two beautiful girls are twins, near twelve years old. The other three are yet infants. My first care was to know these children; and to this effect I determined to have them about me. I saw from the first hour I entered the house that I had much to reform, and something to correct, and referred the means to the development of their different characters.

"The

"The following day I ordered a general dining-table; a custom I found new to them, they having always dined at a different hour and in a different apartment from their mother. In distributing the apple-pie, I unfortunately, though purely accidentally, gave your favourite, the sturdy Henry, more than the rest. I had not observed their eager eyes discriminating each piece as it was carved round, nor that it still remained untouched on their respective plates. In an instant the storm rose; and I was clamorously and rudely called upon to determine a point in which my own impartiality was impeached and condemned.

"Henry, unmoved as a rock, silently ate his pie, rose from the table, and disappeared. I hoped for some relief, from the dispatch with which the object of their contention had been removed from their sight and reach: but they now adverted to their own slices, and the dispute grew warmer and louder; for it happened that these shares were pretty equal. My troubles commenced from

from this moment; the restraint of a few hours was forgotten; and they appeared to consider me as expressly commissioned to listen to their grievances. My time is lost in composing differences which are never healed; tales fabricated by resentment, hourly contests, and hourly acts of injustice and violence, are brought to my arbitration, without the smallest disposition to submit to its decisions.

"I found Edward and Henry went to a day school in the village. The gentleman who presides in it is the curate of the parish, and much esteemed by my brother, who wished, it appears, to have left his boys solely to his care, he having already four pupils who reside with him; but my sister over-ruled this design. I was much puzzled to account for the constant forbearance of Henry in these contentions, that so much disturbed me. There seemed a sullen taciturnity about him, which, to me, strongly indicated a bad temper. Yet I remarked that I had neither complaints of him, nor appeals from him.

He

He never associated with his brother, nor joined in the sports of his sisters. I could not imagine how he passed his leisure time; for I discovered that he was no favourite with the servants, and never with them. One favourite, however, Henry had, and this was an old hound of his father's; and the only boon he deigned to ask me was the permission to give Nero his dinner in the dining-parlour. Whether he perceived any hesitation in my manner, I know not; but he added, bluntly, 'You need not fear: he is too old to gnaw bones, and he always had his meat cut and placed by my father's side.' Henry triumphed—Nero was introduced; and you are acquainted with his merits, and admit his claims.

"During Nero's first repast in the parlour, I was struck by seeing a malicious smile go round the circle, and an air of intrepidity and defiance on the part of Henry. He waited on Nero with the most obsequious attention, minced his meat, and received with evident gratitude and delight some

dainties for him, offered by my hand; then carefully giving him water, he led him out of the house; and to my surprise, I saw him lock the door which confined his favourite to a spot not larger than this room, and which was separated from the larger court for the purpose of rearing partridges: he put the key carefully into his pocket, returned for his hat, and, without thanking me for my indulgence, left the room as usual.

"Some questions respecting the children, which I casually asked one of the maid-servants, threw some light on a subject which interested whilst it perplexed me. Mrs. Nurse, so was the superintendant of the young people called, had asked my permission to carry them to a neighbouring farmer's to drink milk and make hay. I found that this had been one of their amusements during the life of my sister. There were several children in the family, and I cheerfully complied. Edward was of the party; and not seeing Henry at dinner, I concluded that his reserve had yielded to a pleasure so inviting; but

but early in the afternoon I saw him walking with his friend Nero on the lawn. 'How happens it,' said I to the girl who was with me in my bed-room, 'that Henry is returned before the rest of the party?'—'Dear madam,' answered the loquacious damsel, 'master Henry has not been with his brother and sisters!'—'And why not?' demanded I hastily.—'Oh! dear madam, you do not know what a wicked boy he is! Nurse can tell you such stories of him.... His poor mamma, she says, could not bear him in her sight, he was so wilful and stubborn! and madam G—— always said he was the very temper of a relation of my master, who had made her very unhappy; and that master Henry would be her death, for he was the very image of this cruel lady.... But Nurse, madam, can tell you all about him; for I have only been here three months: but I see nobody in the house loves him.'

"She was mistaken, my dear Mrs. Palmerstone, for *I* loved him; and perhaps for a reason not better founded in justice than that which

which had so unfortunately turned the heart of his mother against him. From the first moment I saw him, I thought him the picture of his father: and it may be, yielding to this prepossession, I am in danger of becoming partial in my turn; for it is certain that my interest in this child becomes hourly more lively. My endeavours, in the mean time, to gain his love and confidence, answered so slowly to my wishes, that I began to despair. He neither offended me nor courted my favour; spoke seldom, and answered all my questions with an abruptness and reserve which sometimes grieved me, and which certainly never satisfied me.

"A few evenings before your arrival I took, as usual, a ramble in the park, and was accidentally invited into a by-road which skirts it, by the shade which it offered me from a brilliant setting sun. I had not proceeded far in my new path when I saw Henry sitting with another boy on the grass by the side of a little rivulet: a very pretty boat, full rigged, was in the water before them,

them, and fastened to the stump of a tree: their backs were towards me, and I slowly approached them. Henry was busily engaged in cutting a cork boat, and his companion was reading aloud. As I used no precaution, they heard the rustling of my gown, and, turning their heads, suddenly perceived me. 'It is only my aunt,' said Henry with his usual sang-froid, and continuing his work unmoved. The other boy respectfully rose and bowed to me. 'Here is a seat for you, aunt,' said Henry to me with frankness, pointing to the root of a tree by his side. 'Spread my coat upon it,' added he, addressing his companion; who with alacrity obeyed his orders. I seated myself, not displeased to be thus invited, and still more contented to find that I was not an object for reserve or secrecy. I now admired the boat floating before me, which, although not half a yard long, was a perfect model. Henry, no longer the *silent* Henry, told me that his father had made it for him, and that he had promised

promised him a model of his own ship at his return. He then explained to me the various manœuvres, the rigging, and the difference between that he was making and the one in question: then stopping abruptly, he said with a significant nod—'That is Frank Curtis.' Desirous of hearing the sound of Frank Curtis's voice, I asked him what he was reading, holding out my hand for the book which he held. 'It is,' answered he, 'the Lives of the British Admirals, madam: but my father has a much better edition than this,' (giving me an abridgement of the work, designed for youth.) 'I believe, Henry,' said I smiling, 'you would not dislike to be an admiral, nor this young gentleman to be your first captain.'—'Not half so well,' replied he eagerly, 'as to be his mess-mate in my father's ship:—when that day arrives, I shall not envy the greatest monarch on earth; for a man has every thing who has a friend.'

"He spoke with an enthusiasm that warmed

ed my heart, and called up a blush on the modest countenance of the youth to whom, by a direction of Henry's eyes, it was addressed; who now rising, said that 'it was late, and that his mother would expect him.'

"I remarked that he charged himself with the boat, book, and all Henry's implements of his boat-making art. We now parted; and my nephew and I took the road to the park. In our walk the gaiety and loquaciousness of my companion astonished and amused me. He spoke of his friend—'He had the most brave and honest heart in the world.'.... He talked of the curate, who was his school-master, and the father of the lad. ... 'If there was a good man on earth, Mr. Curtis was one.'

"During this time my pace seemed neither to shackle his mind nor his legs: he was climbing every tree in his way; breaking off old shoots; plucking up hedge-stakes, trimming first the one and then the other, with the dexterity and strength of a workman,

man, whilst our chit-chat went on uninterruptedly. Sometimes the question was asked when he was at my elbow, and the response made twenty or thirty yards distant from me.

"When he had collected nearly a woodman's bundle, I asked him what he purposed to do with them. 'Oh!' replied he, 'I shall leave them by and by'....and soon after running to the park-side he shouted out 'Dame Waters!' so loud that I started. He repeated this name so often that at length an old woman from the other side of the fence answered and showed herself. 'There are some stakes for you,' said he, throwing his load, with a sinewy arm, clear over the hedge: 'take care of them....we shall come to-morrow: it is a holiday.' I now perceived the chimney of the little cottage which was the habitation of Mrs. Waters. 'Frank and I,' said he, on joining me, 'are repairing her pig-sty against she *has a pig*. The last lodger, without a tooth in his head, brought the sty about his ears.'—

'You,

'You are provident at least,' said I laughing: 'and pray, who was this uncivil lodger? and who is dame Waters, who is so much in your good graces?'—'Why,' said he hesitating, 'I put Nero to board with her a few days, just before you came to the Grove.... and as for my favour.....She has lost her only friend, since my father left the Grove. She wanted for nothing then—but now she is poor enough to content them.' He paused—and, quickening his pace, whistled with the clearness of a lark the chorus of 'Hearts of oak!'—'You whistle better,' said I affectionately, 'than you answer, my dear Henry. Tell me why I have never seen your friend Frank Curtis nor dame Waters, at the Grove, since my arrival:....they both seem your favourites.'

"His countenance, my dear Mrs. Palmerstone, assumed a sternness of which you can form no idea; his eyes struck fire, and fixing them steadfastly on my face, 'Why,' said he with emphasis, 'if you must and will know, it is because Frank Curtis scorns

a liar

a liar and a coward: and dame Waters, like *a fool*, took the part of the innocent and the injured.' His features softened, and he turned from me and wept. A momentary silence succeeded. 'I will leave you *now*, aunt,' said he, looking at the house to which we approached; .. 'Nero will want water and a turn or two:' and he darted from me.

"The impressions of this evening were painful to me, and I lost no time in procuring an interview with the good curate. I frankly laid before him my perplexities, and begged he would as freely give me his opinion of the two boys. He spoke with reserve of their mother's weak partiality; but his discretion could not disguise truth.

"'The eldest of your nephews,' said he, 'is a lad of the most brilliant parts, and naturally not ill-disposed; but he has been spoiled by indulgence and unjust preference. Your brother, madam, was sensible of this, and wished to obviate the evils his good sense

sense foresaw must result from such a conduct. But Mrs. G—— would not listen to the proposal of their living under my roof, choosing rather to lose sight of her favourite, by sending him to a very remote school, and keeping Henry at home. You know your brother, madam, and his usual warmth of heart in favour of those who have happily gained his esteem. He preferred my instructions. And I have reasons for believing that Mrs. G—— was not pleased by a resolution which in some degree took a power out of her hands: for the admiral informed me that they would be my pupils until his return, unless removed by a gentleman whom he named to me, and whose address I have.

"'They have been my scholars three years. I had been informed of some part of that unreasonable harshness which had been exercised, even in the nursery, over Henry, and I was prepared by compassion to view him with an indulgent eye. It was necessary. Slow in learning, of a cold and uncon-

unconciliating temper; stubborn and refractory; daring, and insensible to disgrace; he met even my kindness with sullen indifference, and my reproofs with sturdy defiance. With his companions he was melancholy and reserved; a sloven in his habits, and careless of all around him. Some transient gleams of light, from time to time, broke through this intellectual gloom, and I persevered. His growing regard for my son Frank encouraged me, and I availed myself of this circumstance, to make him more diligent, without losing with him the interest I had gained over him by my patience. My son is his elder by two years, and has been very assiduous. I soon found the utility of our mutual plans, and my pupil got forward.

"'I suspect my wife very innocently interrupted this period of improvement and tranquillity. She became as fond of Henry as her son, and, conceiving she could never do enough for a child for whom so little kindness was shown at home, thought her fire-side, or peaceful board, incomplete without

out

out Henry. This preference highly offended Mrs. G——, and gave no less umbrage to the young squire.

"'No sooner had the admiral left the Grove than Henry was forbidden to stay after school hours, to pass his holidays, or even to take a Sunday dinner with us; and his brother was commissioned to see these orders obeyed: which I am sorry to say that he did with rigour and incivility.

"'We had however learned to make a proper estimate of this noble boy, which resisted this poor malice. I promise you, madam, I have never met with a character more decided in generosity, magnanimity, and integrity. It has all the strong and vigorous qualities of greatness and distinguished usefulness. Frank was however a permitted guest at the Grove with my other pupils, when it pleased Mr. Edward to invite them: but an incident which happened immediately after the admiral left us last summer, shut his doors not only against my son but also against his parents. The

boys

boys all went together to fish in a neighbouring stream one holiday. A dispute arose between the brothers; it grew warm; and the other boys interfered, and with one voice condemned Edward as the disturber and offender. 'We shall see,' said he, indignantly turning to Henry, 'who is the aggressor, *at home*, where I will give you a good horsewhipping.'—'You shall fight me *here* first,' said my Frank, beginning to strip off his coat. The sleeve and his angry haste embarrassed him; and sorry I am to be obliged to add, that your nephew thought this a fit moment to strike him on the head a blow which laid him senseless on the ground.

"'Henry sprung upon his brother like an enraged tiger; and, God knows what mischief was spared by the interposition of the other boys; who declared to me, that such was his ungovernable fury, that they believed he would have struck him till he had been dead. As it ended, the young gentleman had only his deserts. He was led home by some of his companions, covered with blood,

blood, which poured from his nose and mouth; the other boys, with Henry, bringing to me my son, still unable to stand.

"'The contusion appeared serious; but immediate relief being at hand happily removed our fears. Judging of the consequences of this business, I ordered Henry to watch the bedside of his friend; and with the boys I went instantly to the Grove. Your sister, madam, admitted me. Suffice it to say, that the concurring evidence of six witnesses, to which, unfortunately, was superfluously joined the testimony of a poor old woman, who was near the field of battle, and saw and heard every thing, availed nothing. The culprit was ordered instantly home, and dame Waters warned never more to approach the house.

"'I had no authority or interest to oppose to these commands, and I withdrew. I cannot however, madam, forbear to mention the severity which from this hour was exercised over this unhappy child: it extended to the privation of domestic comforts. Banished

nished from his mother's presence, neglected by the servants, and taunted by his brother and sisters, he took refuge with dame Waters; and most of his winter evenings were passed under a thatch that scarcely keeps out the rain. My wife was quite unhappy: she urged me to write to the gentleman in town, and, on my refusal, insisted on Henry's coming to us. This I also opposed; and she was obliged to console herself by sending, through Frank, who constantly met him, something to cheer the scanty board.

"'The increasing illness and apparent danger in which I saw Mrs. G—— were invincible arguments in favour of the conduct which I pursued. I foresaw the event which, without any interposition on my part, would relieve this unfortunate child; and which, under any other circumstances, I should have regarded as the heaviest misfortune which could assail his youth..... 'But I find,' said I interrupting him, 'he still goes to his old friends: and that with the help of his friend Frank he is embellishing

lishing her pig-sty. Do me the favour,' continued I, giving him my purse, 'to join your good offices, and to see that it does not want inhabitants....I must not enter into any past events.....justice might be misconstrued into censure..... These difficulties are now done away in a manner that precludes all retrospection; but this woman is from this very hour *my Henry's* care.'—He smiled. 'Beware! madam,' cried he: 'the very best movements of the human heart require regulation. *Your Henry*, if you do not take care, will be an invader of the rights of others, after experiencing the depressive yoke of the usurper of his own.' —'I thank you,' answered I: 'I will do all I can to *steel* my heart against him; but, to say the truth, he is at present its first concern. Consider, my good Mr. Curtis, the arrears which kindness owes him.'—'I believe,' replied he, 'that he has sagaciously discovered that you are disposed to pay these debts; for he tells Frank you are the counterpart of his father, and no more disposed

to listen to his enemies than he was. 'I know not,' says he, 'whether my brother and the rest of them have tried to ruin me with her; but I know they will if they can. I have only to hope that they will fear an impartiality which will not take evidence upon trust: at present she is all goodness, and studies to make all of us happy.'

"'I foresee, my dear madam,' continued Mr. Curtis, 'that nothing can end these dissensions but a separation. Edward considers his brother with an insolent superiority, with concealed malice, and a fearful suspicion. He knows his *prowess*, and he dreads it. Henry entertains for him a rooted contempt, more difficult to eradicate from his mind than the injuries he has suffered. He unfortunately has for the basis of this cold and avowed scorn, proofs of a duplicity at which his own nature revolts; for I verily believe that he would suffer death rather than tell a lie, or betray another to shame and punishment. These boys must be parted. Time and maturer reason may do much to correct

correct their opposite tempers, and soften down these feuds of their early days.' I am persuaded," continued Mrs. Chandler, "you will with me adopt the good curate's advice."

"Most undoubtedly," answered I, "and I am happy he has such an advocate.... My father will, I am certain, concur in any plan Mr. Curtis thinks proper to recommend. The *young squire*, as the good curate calls him, must be placed in a large public school. I am much mistaken if he do not, in any of these epitomes of the world, meet with insolence to check his own ungoverned vanity, cunning to match his poor and little malice, and true courage and magnanimity, uncontrolled by a mother's prohibition, to repress, and, if he be wise enough, to correct his arrogance.

"But let us not say more of him, for I am too angry to be just. We will now consider what it is proper to do with the *girls*, who appear equally to require our cares and exertions.

"I think a remedy for these much more difficult to obtain than for the boys."—"Why so?" demanded Mrs. Chandler. "They are younger, and no such declared violence subsists between them."—"It may be so," returned I; "and yet my experience has convinced me that the bickerings and childish disputes of girls contain in them infinitely more mischief than the avowed resentment and hasty rage of boys. The first engender all the mean subterfuges of malice and envy; much more deadly to the human breast than the declared violation of moderation and self-command. Whether it arise from the certain decorums to which our sex is subject; or whether from our weakness to repel, or to give, the insults of blows, or any other decided proof of anger—but so it is, we appear to indemnify ourselves for this forbearance, by an irreconcileable and concealed enmity, which seeks its pleasure in detraction and malignity. I am sorry to discourage you, but I think you will have much more trouble with your girls than with your boys. Nor must you, my dear

dear Mrs. Chandler, confine your attention to the two eldest. The two youngest, although they cannot reckon between them more than twelve years, exhibit already the force of example, and the pernicious consequences of neglect. I have listened to your narrative; now do you listen to mine. It will yet explain to you some of the mysteries of our hero's conduct.

"You left me yesterday morning with my father to meet the admiral's attorney. On your stepping into the coach I returned to the breakfast-parlour; and our girls, with my woman, followed the carriage, as had been agreed, in order to have a walk, and then a ride home with you. I took up a book, and it engaged me till a piercing scream startled me. I rose with haste, and saw on the lawn your two little damsels eagerly contending for a kitten, which one grasped at arm's length, whilst the other, unable to reach it, was tugging at her sister's hair. The complaints of the kitten, who appeared to suffer, were lost in their clamours.

clamours. I was on the point of stepping to its relief, when Henry with the speed of an eagle pounced upon them from the Grove. He took the kitten from his sister, placed it in his bosom, and said with the utmost composure, 'Now, young ladies, fight it out;' and walked away.

"They followed him some paces, filling the air with their cries; and then went, as I judge, to lodge their complaints with Mrs. Nurse; for I saw them no more. Your maid attended me at the toilet, and I mentioned the young ladies' quarrel; saying I hoped they had not hurt each other. 'Poor things!' answered she, 'they have been crying all this morning for their kitten: master Henry will never bring it again, for he delights in teasing them.'—'It seems,' replied I, 'they delight in teasing each other; and I think their brother will do well to remove from them the subject of their contention.'—'Oh! madam,' returned she, 'you do not know *this wicked boy*. Nurse has been telling me this morning

such

such things of him! When his dear mother was dying at Bristol, he quarrelled with his brother, and beat him cruelly—only for tying a piece of paper to old Nero's tail. He said it was a squib; although master Edward declared it was not: and Nurse says she will swear it was only paper. Indeed, madam, he is a very bad boy! But my lady will soon find him out.'

"Yes," exclaimed Mrs. Chandler, the tears gushing from her eyes, "yes: blessed be God! I have found him out—under all the oppressive indignities of unmerited prejudice, nobly sustaining himself, and nourishing those virtues which will render him the honest pride of his father and friends. How often have I heard mine exultingly say, when my brother's rising merit was spoken of, that he had predicted it! and that the defender of his country had begun his career of glory by being the defender of pigs and jack-asses!"

"He could hardly have found a better evidence,"

evidence," replied I; "for the truly brave are always humane."

A piercing scream now reached us from the adjoining apartment:—it was your voice, my Eliza, and I sprang with breathless terror to your assistance. You ran into my arms, and hid your face in my bosom. Assured of your safety, I surveyed the scene before me. On one side stood the intrepid miss Anna G—— with inflamed cheeks and swollen eyes, heedless of the blood which was flowing plentifully from her hand, and streaming down her white frock. On the other stood Mr. Edward with unpitying regard, holding the weapon of offence and contention in his hand. This was a small knife, to which it appeared both of them had claimed a right, and which both of them had maintained, till the accident gave it into the possession of Mr. Edward. But this by no means settled the question; miss Anna clamorously and obstinately persisting that the knife was hers,

and

and Edward, without the smallest compunction, as vehemently declaring that it was his. 'He had bought it and paid for it, and his sister might find another where she pleased; for she should not have that to cut pencils with.' Poor Mrs. Chandler's meek and quiet spirit sunk under this altercation. She looked at me, shook her head, and burst into tears.

To relieve her, I coldly desired miss Helen to call Mrs. Nurse to bind up the wound: this probably reminded miss Anna that she had one, and she now bewailed it with sobs and lamentations.

During this time my attention was frequently diverted by the young person who still clung to my breast; and who asked me twenty times, in a low trembling voice, "Is the wound deep? is she very much hurt? does she still bleed?" For sorry am I to observe, that you approach rather too nearly to those 'who if they do look on blood will faint.' Thus, however,

concluded the business, and I shall never forget it.

Poor Mrs. Chandler's patience was once more put to the trial, on the morning preceding that of our departure. During your walk before breakfast, with your grandfather, she was called upon to settle a dispute between the two eldest girls: I was just descending into the garden, when they passed me, bathed in tears. I followed them to the alcove, and found them sitting and still weeping. I asked them with gentleness, what had disturbed them; and Helen told me that their aunt had informed them that morning of Mr. Palmerstone's and her intention of placing them at a boarding-school: "And only think, madam," added she, sobbing, "we are to be in different schools! Pray intercede for us." —"I am very sorry," replied I, "that it is not in my power to oblige you in all things, but I entirely concur in your aunt's wise resolution. Sisters who do not live in

mutual

mutual love and kindness together, live in mutual disgrace: some years hence, you will, I hope, discover this truth, and reflect that nature has even added to the common ties of blood a peculiar and endearing bond of union between you two."

They hung down their heads: I saw their hearts were softened by the fear of being separated. "The bad health of your mamma," continued I, "forced her to consign you to the care of those in whom she had confidence, for your personal safety and wants. These cares, I doubt not, have been faithfully discharged. But permit me to observe that they have omitted *others* more important—not with design, but through weakness and inability. In redressing the inconveniences that have arisen from your childish disputes and petty contentions, they have only considered their own temporary relief and tranquillity. They have not endeavoured to correct in *your minds* those propensities which led you so often, and so disgracefully, to violate the law

of

of God, and the dictates of nature. Thus the habits of contradiction, thus the selfish and exclusive demand, thus the resentment prompt to meet offence, and the spirit of unforgiveness, has 'grown with your growth, and strengthened with your strength.' But, my dear young friends, neither your almighty Creator, nor the world in which you now live, will tolerate this temper. Your own hearts will revolt at it; for I cannot bring myself to the belief that there is a child on earth who could refuse herself the satisfaction of contemplating the picture of a family united by kindness and mutual good will—a family in which all found indulgence for common errors, and help for common wants. I should be disappointed and grieved, if I did not see, as at this moment, the tears of sympathy flow at such a representation."

The girls wept in silence. . . . "Sincerely do I wish," continued I, "that I could, in respect to you, perfect my sketch still more. Would that I could present *your mother* joyfully presiding over her family of love!—

But

But you have *a father*: and what is to be the recompense of his fatigues and toils? what his reward for the anxieties of his parental heart? Is it to be a discord more distressing to him than the attacks of the public enemy? Or shall he, at his return, find peace in his own house? Shall he have the prospect of security for his children, in those bonds of amity and love, that alone can shelter them in a world to which even at this moment they may be exposed, and to which, under the most prosperous events, at a future period they certainly will?....Murmur not then at your aunt's prudent regulations. You will, each of you, in your respective destinations, learn to value as you ought a sister's love and a sister's indulgence. The experiment will be unpleasant; but it will be your own fault if it be not profitable. I wish to prepare you for it. Be assured that in a school your comfort will depend on *your temper*. Every indication of a petulant and quarrelsome one will meet with powerful opposition and numberless provocations. A girl who cannot yield

yield to the requests and the wishes of thirty or forty her own headstrong will, resembles a wasp who shall dare to attack the numerous guards of a bee-hive. She may perchance sting some one in the unequal combat, but she will infallibly meet with punishment which will effectually disarm her." I rose to depart. Subdued by my discourse, the poor girls implored my pity, and promised they would never have any more disputes. They begged so hard not to be separated, that I relented, and engaged to speak in their favour, on condition that they had no quarrels from that hour to their leaving the Grove.

Your grandfather, the evening before our departure, examined Mr. Edward's pretensions to learning. He had with ourselves seen several times his instructor and his family, and was prepared to find Edward advanced. He tells me that his acquirements exceeded his expectations, particularly in Latin; and that he should have been liberal in his commendations, had he not perceived they were too securely expected. He informed

formed him of his intention of placing him at Winchester school, and added such advice as he judged necessary. The boy felt the mild superiority of wisdom, and with conscious shame acknowledged that he merited reproof. "That is sufficient," said my father: "a son worthy of my friend admiral G—— will blush to commit a second time those faults which he has once confessed to be reprehensible; and to wear with honour his name, you must find other enemies than a *brother*, and a different antagonist from a *sister*. Your enemies, sir, must be those of your gallant father, and they are the enemies of his country and of humanity: and suffer me whilst I say that even *to these* admiral G—— teaches the lessons of generosity and benevolence." Edward was affected. He begged of my father his kind mediation between him and his brother, and his endeavours to effect a reconciliation which he earnestly wished.

After supper, you will recollect, your grandfather and the lads went to the library.

I am

I am sorry to finish my narrative with a trait in Henry's character which ought to lessen him in our esteem. My father, in the most affecting terms, represented to them the unhappy effects that would infallibly arise from the declared enmity which then subsisted between them. He spoke of Edward's contrition, and wishes of reconciliation, and pressed Henry to meet with cordiality his brother's proffered friendship. "Mr. Palmerstone," said he with a firmness bordering on sternness, "I hate to quarrel.... As *a brother*, I would wish to live *like* a brother. I never envied Edward in my life a single favour or advantage....God bless him!...and may these never be less!... but as *a friend* I disclaim him; for my nature must change ere I can feel for him the sentiments of one.... My father, sir, will provide for me and that friend who has, perhaps, saved me from destruction. We shall want but little. Whilst I have half-a-crown in my pocket, and bread for the day, I will not remind Edward that he has a brother;

ther; but should he want it, I will share that pittance with him." Edward, with streaming eyes, endeavoured to catch his hand, imploring his pardon. "You have it," said he unmoved, "from my soul. As *a brother*, there is my hand; but I cannot deceive: we are not made to be friends."....On saying this he rushed out of the room. My father assured me that this boy's intrepidity imposed upon him for a moment, and he forgot the obduracy and inflexibility of his temper, in the admiration of his calm and steady spirit.

"At length you see," said he, turning to the afflicted Edward, "the brother whose heart you have hardened by the indulgence of your selfish and petulant passions. Remember what I now tell you: Every year you live, you will have additional reason for your present bitter regrets, unless, by a forbearance and submission you have hitherto neither known nor wished to know, you can conciliate the heart of this noble-minded youth. Place his present disposition to the account

account of that injustice of which he has been the innocent victim; and only find in his resentment, if it be possible, the invaluable price of his love and friendship. Learn from it to know that it is only *the worthless* who will bear insult and contempt: these feel that they deserve *their own* . . . But be assured that the mind which rests its claims on its own internal conviction of their being just, will not easily bend to that weakness which has forgotten or refused them. Your father's influence, time, and, above all, your desire of his friendship, will, I am certain, subdue him. And there is no event of unprosperous fortune that will not, in my opinion, be amply overbalanced by the return of that affection of which you have now to regret the absence: it is above all calculation."

I have now little more to add, than the regulations which are to take place in the course of a month. Mrs. Chandler takes home with her the three youngest children, with the infant's nurse, who pleases her.

All

All the other domestics will be discharged, except the gardener and his son, who are to occupy the lodge. Dame Waters and Nero are to take care of the house. Henry will be as happy as you wish him to be with his friends the good Curtises; and where, I doubt not, the harsh features of his mind will be meliorated by the example and precepts of Mr. Curtis. Edward and his sisters are to pass some weeks with us, before they enter into their destined schools—your grandfather kindly hoping that they may, if they choose it, make the visit useful to themselves, and not unpleasant to us.

We will meet the benevolent purposes of his heart, my Eliza. We will endeavour to convince these misguided young people, that love and harmony are the chief supports of that edifice in which human happiness is to repose. We will do more: we will teach them that they are not only a security for peace and enjoyment *here*, but the qualifications which will be necessary in that

that future state where all is love; and in which no turbulent passion, no unsubdued resentment, no selfish gratification, can find a place. In that blissful abode may you recognise your affectionate mother,

ANGELICA PALMERSTONE!

LETTER VI.

THE BALL,

OR THE

HISTORY OF MISS CROSBY.

IT must always be matter of serious regret to me, my Eliza, to find any occasion of mixing, with that advice and instruction in which I have both pleasure and comfort, admonitions painful to you: but you are of an age fully to understand, that in no one instance of my maternal cares can I give you more undeniable proofs of my affection and solicitude for your happiness, than by those reprehensions which place before you the errors and faults of your youth and inconsiderateness.

You asked me, a few days since, with an air in which I perceived much more of petulant anger and vexation than of friendly concern, 'if I could guess at the cause of

of miss Fearnhead's strange behaviour; for that, for some days, she had refused to walk with or visit you as usual; that, when you had accidentally met her, she was reserved and cold in her manner, and, as you thought, stately.'

I answered your question by observing 'that I had never seen the smallest indications of a capricious temper in miss Fearnhead; that I had observed, on the contrary, uniform kindness, and striking proofs of her attachment to you; and that I therefore recommended to your consideration to seek in your own conduct, rather than in hers, for the reasons of her apparent coldness and estrangement.' You were silent, and I flattered myself that I had said all that was necessary: but I was mistaken.

Yesterday morning I renewed the subject, by asking you, what had been the result of the inquiry which I had recommended relative to miss Fearnhead. You blushed, but it was with resentment: and you replied, with a disdainful toss of your head, 'that you

you knew of nothing which you had done to offend miss Fearnhead; that she did perfectly right to please herself on a point which you were in no wise inclined to dispute; for that a studied neglect was unanswerable.' Were you aware, my child, at that moment, that your mother's assistance was necessary, in order to enable you to analyse those thoughts which too rapidly escaped your own judgement? Were you aware that you were yielding up to your angry passions your reason, and even the convictions of your conscience? Is it not true that you discovered, by one glance into your mind, that self-examination would infallibly bring self-accusation? You shrunk from this trial; preferring, on the weakest ground, to be angry with your friend, rather than, on the most solid, to be dissatisfied with yourself. But, my Eliza, this poor evasion will not do: something still admonishes you, that all is not as it ought to be: and I warn you, that you will be restless and uneasy until that friendly monitor is content.

content. I will add my voice to its faithful suggestions, and I will tell you a plain truth By your present conduct, you are unjust to *yourself* as well as to miss Fearnhead. You are colouring a mistake of youthful inexperience and heedlessness with the tints of ingratitude and sullen ill-humour. I am confident, from my knowledge of the natural integrity of your mind, and the ingenuous simplicity of your nature, that this charge will very sensibly wound you, and possibly you may be strongly tempted to doubt of my penetration, and to accuse my justice. But this subterfuge will not last: like all impositions which cheat us under the semblance of truth, the honest and simple will soon detect the borrowed garb, and the fallacy concealed under it. You will soon return to that docility of spirit, and to that influence in which you know you are secure. You will trust a mother with those interests, and that happiness, which are dearer to her than her own life.

Let us then dispassionately call before us all

all the circumstances which immediately preceded miss Fearnhead's change of behaviour. Let us endeavour to discover the real motives which have produced a conduct so unexpected, and so much resented by you.

You were permitted on your birth-day to invite your own guests; the charge of receiving them and entertaining them devolved on you. I was one of those guests; and I conditioned for no duty beyond that of enforcing your orders, if necessary, with servants whose pleasure it is to oblige you.

I was not dissatisfied with your little embarrassments on receiving your visitors as they respectively entered the drawing-room. I know that the native modesty of youth requires time and habitual practice to fashion the manners to that ease and elegance of deportment which distinguish a polite and well-bred woman. Your timidity, although in some degree awkward, was accompanied by civility and good will; your attention was general and courteous; and your

bashfulness disappeared with the first ceremonies.

I saw with pleasure every face drest in smiles, and every eye sparkling with delight. The formal circle was broken, and in huddled and joyful groups you consulted together about what should be the amusement of the evening. Cards were unanimously rejected; and all with complacence listened to your proposal of showing them a game with maps and geographical cards.

The door opened, and the servant announced the two miss Nashes. In an instant you disappeared, in order to meet them in the anti-chamber; and you returned to your other deserted guests with more animated pleasure, and hanging fondly on the arms of the strangers. Instead of introducing them to those young people who did not know them, (and of this number was your long selected friend miss Fearnhead,) you sought a vacant corner of the apartment, and placed yourself between your new favcurites, apparently forgetful that

any

any besides yourselves occupied any other part of it. Engaged by your whispering and tittering companions, it entirely escaped your observation, that you had imposed silence on the rest of the company, that they had reassumed their seats, and in awkward constraint waited for your recollection of them. Some, from good sense and disapprobation of your behaviour, shrunk into reserve: others, repressed by the supercilious looks of the newly arrived visitors, and by your neglect, felt uneasy and looked abashed. In this unpleasant suspension of all entertainment and social pleasure, your *friend* Isabella was fruitlessly essaying by her looks to recall you to yourself and to your duty, and with admirable address endeavouring at the same time to divert the attention of the young ladies from too close an observation of the impropriety of your conduct. The piano-forte was opened, the music turned over: no one chose to play or to sing. Miss Fearnhead lost her time and her patience: she now approached you. "I

 believe,

believe, my dear Eliza," said she, "that your friends are waiting for you: can I fetch the cards which you mentioned, or will you?" With careless indifference you replied, "They are in the dressing-room: the servant will find them on the table."

One of your miss Nashes prevented more by whispering in your ear, with her eyes fixed on the sweet though disturbed countenance of Isabella. Your answer implied the question, and distinctly reached my ear. "A good sort of a girl....very good-natured.... a neighbour."....Miss Fearnhead, close at my side, looked down, retired instantly, and mixed with the other young people. To this *good sort of a girl*, to this *neighbour of no account*, was miss Palmerstone indebted for all the exertions of good breeding, and good sense, in which she herself was so deficient.... Her gaiety enlivened the remainder of the evening. A spirit of retaliation arose in the breast of some, and in others the desire of amusement; and with the happy expedient of drawing the profiles

files of half the company from the shadow, miss Fearnhead succeeded in making them perfectly indifferent to the donor of the feast, and unmindful of her partial adoption.

When left to ourselves, you asked your friend 'how she liked the miss Nashes?' —"I do not know them," answered she gravely. Without observing the air or the tone with which this reply was made, you expatiated warmly on the wonderful merits of these young ladies; their beauty, their air of fashion, and above all their wit: they were lively beyond expression. No comments were made. We retired, with your kissing your friend, and saying 'that she looked tired.'

The next morning I did that which you ought to have done. I thanked miss Fearnhead for her delicate and kind consideration; marked your omissions, and did not forget your rudeness to her, and your inattention to her good offices; engaging that the time was not distant when you would most sensibly feel and acknowledge your fault.

fault. "I am, madam," said this sweet and amiable girl, "perfectly convinced that it will be as you say. Eliza had no intention to offend me, and I should blush to be offended by a behaviour which I confess vexed me. I wished to have prevented this, not presuming on my better knowledge, but as being her friend. I am two years older than Eliza: it is not surprising that I am somewhat more sedate....My friend," added she smiling, "was absent: it was my duty to supply her place."

I believe you will expect to hear, after this, that it was I who prescribed the conduct which miss Fearnhead has since observed; for miss Palmerstone is not yet *returned*.

We will now, in order to prepare for this *return*, inquire into the pretensions of the ladies who have thus allured you from yourself and your former friend. In this inquiry, we will silently pass over the indecorum of any marked preference of guests in your own house and at your own table, where neither

neither rank nor influence can claim an exclusive right to any beyond the established rules of precedency. We will confine ourselves simply to the question of 'What is their title to your particular favour and notice *any where?*' I think you met these young ladies twice or thrice at sir George Fairfield's in Cornwall, whilst we were with lady W——, and you have seen them as often since their being in town. You wished to show them some civilities: and you were right—as they form a part of your general acquaintance, and as they are known to some of our friends.

Have you a precise idea of what your grandfather means, when with an ironical air he talks of '*pretty misses?*' I think you would, in an hour, have discovered in these girls two of them, if you had fully comprehended his sarcastic appellation. Do you find in them any of those qualities which attract his approving smiles? Do you find any of that amiableness at which we have seen him melt into tears, as it brought to his recol-

recollection that of his deceased son, your father? You have, indeed, my child, been strangely misled! We will now endeavour to assimilate your new favourites with Isabella: but the opposition in their characters renders this no easy task; for where shall we look for any resemblance between the unassuming and mild virtues of miss Fearnhead, and the pertness and conceit of the miss Nashes? In fact, they have not one feature in common. They would shrink from a competition with her, even for external advantages; and, silly as they are, they would feel too sensibly her superiority, to enter the lists on the score of mental endowments.

We have, however, only one more step to make before we shall detect the latent cause which has, for a time, seduced you into a forgetfulness of those principles which you have been taught to consider as the only sure guides in your adoption of friends and companions. We shall find this cause in the poor and changeling offspring of the human mind, *Vanity;* this childish and craving

craving inmate of the heart, which Reason laughs at, and could, by a steady look, awe to annihilation; and to which, nevertheless, she so frequently and so abjectly yields up her power, and submits her authority. Yes, my Eliza, your vanity has disgraced your understanding. You accompanied lady W— to sir George Fairfield's in an elegant carriage adorned with a *coronet*, and attended by two servants. Your dress and appearance, and, if you will, include mine, did not disgrace this equipage. The miss Nashes were in ecstasies with miss Palmerstone, her London fashions, and her new dancing-steps: but they did not forget themselves in their admiration of you. They talked of their papa's park, their mamma's jewels, and an Irish peer who was their first cousin. Thus was laid the first foundation of your mutual partiality.

In London you perceived these girls affecting all the airs of importance which folly annexes to the title of *heiresses*, overlooking to-day those whom they had ac-

knowledged the day before; confidently and haughtily pretending to and assuming place and distinction with their equals; insolently intimidating the meek and the modest, by their rude and contemptuous looks and marked indifference to all but the selected favourite of the hour.

Have I charged these traits too strongly? I refer you to the ball at Mr. Fortescue's, and I cheerfully rest my candour on the judgement you will pass. You were, however, their idol that evening, and very much elated by the distinction. I was sorry for it; because I was certain that you were preparing for yourself a mortification to which you had hitherto been a stranger. You were persuaded that the decided preference of the showy and lively miss Nashes gave you consequence in the eyes of your friends; and I was diverted by observing the air of protection you assumed with one or two of those whom you wished to partake of your good fortune. You copied the tone and the manner of your favourites; became fatigued

when

when they chose to be tired; were negligent in the dance; and could never find a seat but at their side. You succeeded, though awkwardly, in your part; and entirely forgot that miss Palmerstone in a hackney-coach, or in a front box, with 'odd-looking people,' that is to say, with her best and dearest friends, would be an absolute stranger in the eyes of the fashionable miss Nashes. But I will not rest my predictions on improbable events. Your friends may possibly escape the appellation of 'odd-looking,' and you may not approach them in so humble a vehicle as a hackney-coach; but the event is not the less certain. The first time they meet a better-dressed girl, or one introduced with more eclat of rank and fashion, the charming miss Palmerstone will be *nobody*; and should it happen that she presses upon their recollection by civility and accustomed familiarity, they will, without the smallest difficulty, teach her to understand that *rudeness* is not very remote from *insult*.

For

For this experiment have you hazarded the loss of a faithful friend; one who has known and loved you for more than three years; one who has shared your innocent pleasures and casual pains; one just to your merits, and indulgent to your faults: in a word, one who does you honour (unportioned and unallied as she is) by her attachment to you; for she acknowledges worth only, and coldly rejects the claims of pride and caprice. She knows, young as she is, that friendship and mutual confidence must have for their basis a virtuous mind, a steadiness of character, and an affectionate temper. She respects herself, and will not stoop to the affectation of follies that she despises, or court the favour of those whom she can neither esteem nor trust. But she has a heart that will forgive inconsiderate error. It is still open to you. To be the cherished inmate of it, you have only to forget your miss Nashes, and be again yourself.

The following incident, in the life of your favourite Mrs. Fermor, will exhibit, I trust,

most

most powerfully the advantages resulting from a sincere and virtuous choice in early friendships. It may not be inapplicable to the present occasion: at all events, it will serve to convince you that it is in your own power to render yourself worthy of the friend whom you have offended.

You have so frequently seen the amiable Mrs. Fermor, that it is needless to expatiate on her character: you will admit without hesitation the general, I may say the universal opinion, which pronounces her to be one of the politest women in London; and to this her friends will add, that she is equally estimable for the virtues of her mind. But I believe it is reserved for me to inform you that in early life, with all the endowments of her mind and the graces of her person, she was in the utmost danger of sinking into one of your grandfather's 'pretty misses.' I must, however, prelude my little narrative with the leading incidents in the life of miss Crosby, the friend of miss Clarendon, now Mrs. Fermor.

Miss

Miss Crosby lost her mother when she was an infant: her family connexions took no share in an event that deprived her of the first of human blessings.

Mrs. Crosby had highly offended her family, by a marriage which they regarded as disgraceful to her friends and ruinous to herself.

This lady, when young, was an orphan, and heiress to a considerable estate; her father, who was the last surviving parent, having left her, and her large fortune, to the care of an old gentleman, whose habitual parsimony and exact honesty were his best recommendations to so important a trust. His love of money, and aversion to expense, entered into his plans relative to his ward; and he was perfectly satisfied with a conduct which had for its principle the most scrupulous attention to the savings of a long minority. He lived in a very retired way at N——; and his young charge, with a housekeeper and three servants, composed his household. The young lady's family paid

paid little attention to arrangements which had in a great measure removed her from their sphere of action. They censured her father's will, and forgot the means by which they could have rectified what was principally defective in it.

At a very early age this young and inexperienced girl became acquainted with Mr. Crosby, the son of the keeper of the county jail. He was nephew to her guardian's housekeeper, and frequently visited an aunt who loved and was proud of him: this was not without reason; for to a remarkably fine person he joined a conduct which had gained him the good opinion of all who knew him. His father, whose only child he was, had exerted his utmost abilities in his education; and he was at this period clerk to an eminent attorney at N——.

It does not appear what share the aunt had in the intrigue: but it is certain that in two months after the lady became of age it finished by a clandestine marriage; and the consequence was, a formal renunciation of

of her by her family connexions. The young couple retired to a distant part of the country, and resided in a handsome house on Mrs. Crosby's estate. It will not be seeking too remotely for causes, if we attribute the rapid decline of Mrs. Crosby's health, after her marriage, to the uneasiness of her mind. She happily discovered qualities in the husband, which, it may be presumed, had been very little heeded in the choice of the lover. Mr. Crosby was a sensible, worthy man; and with unremitting affection and tenderness he cherished the woman whom his heart had selected with more eagerness than his interest had sought her fortune. She discovered every day that he was worthy of the notice and favour of her relations; and with an anxiety which augmented with this conviction she solicited a reconciliation.

Mr. Crosby entered into these sentiments, not only as they corresponded with his own honest purposes in respect to his wife's settlement, but as they appeared so intimately

intimately connected with her tranquillity. But the undisguised and unrestrained resentment that appeared in the haughty answers to their repeated solicitations convinced them that it was in vain to hope for any reconciliation. Mr. Crosby was told that he was a villain; his wife the victim of his artifices, the dupe of her own folly, and an alien from their blood. Mrs. Crosby felt with bitterness and indignation this outrage on the honour of her husband, and forgot that, by her infringement of those obligations due to the established laws of society, she had furnished to the intemperate anger of her family an apology which would meet with general acceptance, if not a complete justification. Her death left miss Crosby an infant three years old, and a husband inconsolable. He considered his wife as having been, in reality, the victim of her attachment to him, and with unfeigned sorrow lamented an affection so fatal to their common happiness. Mr. Crosby wanted not spirit to encounter the contempt of his wife's

wife's family; and after her decease he declined all occasions of recalling them to his remembrance.

Occupied with his Emma, and cares for her welfare, he became more and more recluse; but his retirement excluded not the respect of his neighbours, nor attention to the wants of the poor. When his darling child had reached her sixth year, he wisely considered her danger under his fond indulgence, and he determined to place her in the hands of a lady twenty miles from him, who had for many years sustained a very high reputation at the head of a school not less numerous than respectable.

This lady, whose name was Sandford, was deserving of the confidence of the anxious parent: she entered with the tenderest interest into the good Mr. Crosby's views, and the peculiar situation of his child. Emma Crosby was about fourteen when I became a boarder with Mrs. Sandford. She had been always considered as the child, as well as the pupil, of this excellent lady:

lady: and I found that I had been much favoured by being the first young lady with whom she had slept; for she had, till my arrival, shared her governess's room. This preference arose, perhaps, from my mother's having met Mrs. Sandford, during her summer vacation, at the house of a friend. Struck by the manners and attainments of her pupil, she then resolved on leaving me with Mrs. Sandford during her expected absence from England. She mentioned her intentions, and added some unfeigned commendations of Emma. Mrs. Sandford related the history of her mother, spoke with concern of the dejected father, and finished with affectionate praise of "dear Emma."

Miss Crosby and myself, during this time, had, with all the facility of youthful and artless nature, become very fond of each other; and our intimate union at school confirmed this good will, and produced a friendship which time and experience have sanctioned.

In a few months after my arrival and settlement

settlement miss Clarendon came, and was lodged in our chamber: she was of my age, and somewhat younger than Emma; of a noble and ancient family; and had lived with her great-uncle, from her infancy, at a beautiful seat in the neighbourhood of S——, the place of Mrs. Sandford's residence. With a very considerable fortune, which she inherited from her mother, she was also the acknowledged heiress of Winford castle and its rich domains: she was a fine showy girl, high-spirited, impatient of contradiction, disdainful in her deportment, and prompt in her resentments. To balance these defects, she possessed unequalled gaiety and generosity, with a careless good humour which was never averse to mirth or sport. My friend Emma shrunk from her advances to familiarity and confidence: her quiet and gentle spirit met with timidity the proffered friendship of the heiress of Winford castle. I was as lively as miss Clarendon, and delighted in the society of a girl who animated every thing within her reach. Emma insensibly became easy and unconstrained

strained with her, and we shared in common our little pleasures and our little mortifications.

The yearly ball now drew near. Miss Clarendon, the most expensively dressed girl in the house, and who appeared to consider this distinction as an undeniable prerogative, expected Mrs. Sutton, her uncle's housekeeper, in order to settle that important article, her attire for the occasion: Mrs. Sandford not being judged competent to such a care by the zealous Mrs. Sutton, whose long services and attachment to miss Clarendon had been productive of considerable influence in the family, and had, in fact, changed her original station to that of an inmate of the drawing-room when it was without other guests.

Mrs. Sutton arrived a few days before the ball, in a coach filled with band-boxes. A new and costly silk robe was displayed to our admiring eyes; silver fringe and tassels decorated it most splendidly. To this superb dress were added white and silver shoes,

shoes, and a London cap of silver gauze ornamented with silver flowers. Mrs. Sandford had most undoubtedly shown a very different taste in Emma's equipments; for a muslin frock, and a bunch of roses for her head, completed the preparations made for her.

It was customary for those friends of our governess, or of the young ladies, who did not wish to participate in the pleasure or fatigue of the ball, to assemble in her drawing-room in order to see the ladies when prepared for it; and as we finished our toilet, we repaired thither to receive their good-natured smiles of approbation, and some marks of kindness, which we pocketed. No one in the house had been judged capable of dressing the heiress of Winford castle, by Mrs. Sutton, but herself. She had been indulged with a particular room for this purpose, and miss Clarendon had passed in review before Emma and myself were ready; and had been conducted by the triumphant and exulting Mrs. Sutton

to

to her uncle, who was seated in great state at the head of the ball-room, ready to receive her.

When we entered the drawing-room Mr. Crosby met his daughter: he surveyed with melancholy attention her light and elegant person, took her tenderly by the hand, gazed on her face, and sighed profoundly; then rising with ill-concealed agitation he placed round her neck a gold chain, to which was suspended her mother's picture set round with brilliants; and once more looking at her with undefinable emotions, he burst into tears and suddenly quitted the room.

This affecting scene retarded us for some time. Poor Emma wept bitterly, and was long in composing her fluttered spirits, till soothed by Mrs. Sandford, and encouraged by all around her. We at length entered the ball-room. The girls crowded about us on our appearing, curious to learn the cause of our delay: but this curiosity instantly yielded to the admiration that Emma's new ornament excited.

Miss

Miss Clarendon, who had till then enjoyed without a competitor all the honours resulting from her finery, approached us, to make the same inquiries, which had been forgotten by the girls, who were now engaged in remarking the striking likeness of Emma to the picture. Miss Clarendon was called upon in a moment to confirm this opinion, and to admire miss Crosby's elegant decoration. Her face flushed with rage: all the violence and pride of her ungoverned mind burst forth; and with the most insolent disdain in her manner, and the most bitter irony of tone, she remarked that Mr. Crosby had omitted the most essential part of his gift. "Had the *keys* of the prison," added she, sarcastically smiling, "been hung to the *chains*, we should at once have recognised the grand-daughter of the jailor at N——."

The insulted Emma, still agitated by her interview with her father, turned as pale as death, and was sinking to the floor quite insensible. Speedy assistance was given, and she was conveyed from the room. You will

will easily imagine the confusion this occasioned. Emma's sudden indisposition perplexed the principal figure dancer: every girl who had witnessed the scene, and knew the cause of miss Crosby's illness, cautiously shunned miss Clarendon, lest they should be mistaken for her abettors or defenders.

The task of the evening closed, and I was dismissed with the rest to my repose. Weary, dejected, and very angry, I prepared to step into bed, without speaking or looking at miss Clarendon; but not before I had silently observed that Emma's place was vacant. My heart palpitated with resentment. I did not dare to give utterance to my voice, or the upbraidings that I wished miss Clarendon to hear. At length I perceived she made no advances to join me; and pushing back the side curtain to cast one indignant look at her, I found she was sitting by the bed-side, exactly in the same state in which she had entered the room. My heart, Eliza, was hardened against her, and I thought she was sullen. "You did well," said I with a toss, "to

disencumber yourself of your finery in the dressing-room, as you intend to pass the night in that chair: I conclude," added I with unpitying accent, "that such is your design."—"No matter where I pass it!" exclaimed she, casting herself on her knees, and hiding her face in the bed-clothes. "No matter what becomes of me!" pursued she: "I hate myself! every one hates me! they must hate me: for God himself hates the proud of heart."

My resentment softened in a moment: soothings instead of reproaches now engaged my thoughts. We passed the night in plans to reinstate her in the favour of Mrs. Sandford, and to gain forgiveness from the gentle Emma. "I know not," said miss Clarendon, "what apology I can make; but there is none that I shall think too humiliating. Shall I confess the truth, and plead that for an excuse, which will disgrace my understanding, as much as I have exposed my bad and headstrong temper? But indeed, my dear Angelica, so it was, I was certainly influenced by Sutton's

conversation.

conversation. I think that I should not otherwise have been so cruel. But she expressed her surprise that Mrs. Sandford had found no other apartment for me than miss Crosby's: 'she thought,' she said, 'that every one should have their proper place; and that, whatever Mrs. Sandford might think of her *pet*, the grand-daughter of the N—— jailor could not find hers with the heiress of Winford castle.....But your uncle shall know it,' continued she, reddening with anger: 'if any thing can prevail upon him to send you beyond his daily reach, this will: and London is the proper place in which to find you education, and proper associates.' However,' said she, settling my robe, 'they will see the difference to-night at least!' I have, my dear Angelica, heard too many of these conversations. I am neither so childish nor so silly as not to see this woman's motives, for she consults only her own interest: but I have not been wise enough to despise them, and to-night—but why do I talk of it? I can never be forgiven!"

Three whole days passed, and we saw

not Emma: she was ill. On the fourth she took her place in the school-room with placid cheerfulness, met the greetings of her companions with kindness and gratitude; and in passing me pressed my hand, and whispered, "Thank you, do not forsake her." She neither shunned nor sought miss Clarendon, spoke occasionally to her with polite reserve, and appeared the same meek and unoffending Emma.

She still continued to sleep in Mrs. Sandford's apartment, and I diligently sought an opportunity of expressing to her, how much this separation grieved me. "All will be well," answered she, the tears running down her pale cheek: "all will be as it ought to be, my dear friend, in a few days. I am not permitted to tell miss Clarendon that I pity her; my governess did not choose I should answer her letter; but I think you may assure her, that you know I still love her. She has injured herself, not me, and there is no cause for my ceasing to love her; for I am proud of my alliance with integrity and humanity. I am proud of being the grandchild

grandchild of that man of whom even the meek and benevolent Howard would have said: 'Behold the friend of the miserable: respect the man who communicates comforts to his fellow-man in a prison, and beguiles the sad hours of captivity and chains of their burthen.' Miss Clarendon knew him not; she thought only of the obscurity and meanness of his condition in life; and, in a moment of heedless folly, forgot the lessons of Mrs. Sandford, who constantly inculcates that it is not the post allotted to us, but the diligent discharge of the duties annexed to it, which stamps us with honour. Comfort her, my dear Angelica, and instruct her; for she has a noble mind."

This injunction I faithfully observed. To say the truth, miss Clarendon stood in need of consolation. I do not believe that the severest corporeal punishment, or the most humiliating mortification, would have produced on miss Clarendon's mind half the pain that it endured from the suspense in which she was kept. Not a word escaped

any of the teachers that had any reference to the ball. Every indication of curiosity on the subject, on the part of the young ladies, was repressed; and various were our comments on this inexplicable silence. Some of the girls attributed it to the influence of the *heiress* with Mrs. Sandford; others, with more probability and candour, to that of the gentle ascendency of Emma; whilst the greater part had ceased to interest themselves in an affair from which they had only experienced a slight privation of amusement.

Mrs. Sandford had not spoken on the subject to miss Clarendon, any further than telling her that miss Crosby would shortly answer the letter which she had sent her. The irritable temper of this poor girl, and the continual vexation in which she was, manifested themselves in her countenance: she looked pale, and lost her appetite. On the Sunday evening we assembled as usual for the purpose of its peculiar duties. Fourteen days had nearly elapsed since the unfortunate ball. At the conclusion of the prayers, Mrs. Sandford said with dignity and calmness,

calmness, "Young ladies, there now remains for me a duty which has not been forgotten, although suspended in order to render it in its performance more impressive and salutary." She paused. Never shall I forget, my Eliza, what passed in my mind at that instant! Although perfectly free from blame, I felt like a criminal before his judge, and with downcast eyes and beating heart supported the trembling miss Clarendon.

"The offence," continued Mrs. Sandford, "on which I have the painful office of animadverting, was a public one, and my reprehension of it must be public also. But, my dear children, look not at this moment for the offender amongst you: the most sincere repentance, and the most generous avowal of the affront, have cancelled miss Clarendon's fault in the memory of her who suffered from it. Miss Clarendon is once more entitled to that place in our hearts, which she so heedlessly, and intemperately hazarded by yielding to the suggestions of a ruling passion. She will, I doubt not, permit me to use her name as the vehicle of those

those truths which I now wish to impress on your minds. She will tell you that she has experienced, in all the bitterness of such a conviction, that in insulting the feelings of a fellow-creature you plunge a poniard into your own breast. She will tell you that pride and arrogance defeat, and always will defeat, their own purpose; and that neither rank nor fortune, nor beauty nor talents, can cover the deformity of the heart in which pride and envy and malice have their dire abode. But she will say yet more. She will tell you that her repentant tears have been sweet; that a healing balm has diffused itself in the wounds inflicted by self-reproach, since she has banished these enemies of human peace and of human honour. She will tell you, that from the hour in which she acknowledged herself the slave of passion, and nobly cast off the debasing power, she has recovered her self-esteem, and that she looks forward to a completer triumph. Nor will she be disappointed. 'The proselyte of truth is doubly dear to us all.'—She extended her arms to the weeping girl, with

emotions

emotions that she did not affect to conceal. "This is," said she, "an hour of victory indeed! O may it for ever expel from the hearts of my children these cruel invaders! But," added she, sweetly smiling, "I forget my Emma: she has a right which I withhold. Let me restore to her her beloved miss Clarendon." The girls were in an instant locked in each other's arms; whilst I with wild joy was clinging to Mrs. Sandford, incapable of speaking my love and gratitude.

Mrs. Sandford now, with collected seriousness, addressed her pupils: "You ought," said she, "to know the real value of those distinctions which so tenaciously influence human opinions and direct human pursuits. I am not called upon to inquire either into the origin, the utility, or the reasonableness of pre-eminence in rank, and power, and wealth. It is sufficient for my purpose, that such distinctions have always existed in social life; and, under some form or other, will exist so long as man associates with man. We ought as common mem-

bers

bers of it to respect the common and established laws of the society in which we live; and those who support, by a conduct conformable to their elevation, their claims to respect, ought to receive it. But they who trust to external honours for consideration will do well to look into their feeble tenure: *this* will afford nothing on which pride can erect its absurd pretensions. They will find the trophies of their greatness mixed with base alloy; that they have been borne by those who have tarnished and soiled them; and that they have been disgraced by vice and obscured by poverty. Miss Crosby's grandfather was the keeper of a common prison; and content with his humble condition, he honourably and conscientiously performed the duties of it. Miss Clarendon's paternal grandfather had to support the dignities of a long train of noble ancestors: his profusion and licentious indulgences disgraced them, and brought ruin and want on himself. He was arrested for debts which his vices had led him to incur, and confined for a consider-

able

able time in N—— gaol: and to the humanity of its keeper was he indebted for the comforts of his prison, and the decent supply of his daily necessities.

"Let this example teach you all, the folly and presumption of looking back to your ancestors for that honour which must result from your own conduct, or for any apology for supercilious contempt of those whom you imagine to be your inferiors; for be assured that this contempt will infallibly revert on yourselves. Remember, it is your own virtue and your own wisdom that must ennoble you. The mockery of ceremonial usages, the forms of respect which power and overgrown wealth exact, you will find of easy price; few are disposed to dispute for *straws*: but expect no homage from the heart, nor any deference from the understanding: these are not imposed upon with gewgaws; they will have *merit*, or they will laugh at your pretensions.

"To these observations," continued the good Mrs. Sandford, "I have only one decision

cision to add, which by its solemn importance supersedes all the deductions of human reason and experience, whilst it confirms their inferences. You know that the great and powerful Being has declared 'that pride was not made for man.'"

We were dismissed, and the remainder of the evening was given to extraordinary indulgence and joy; and to crown all, our Emma retired to the same bed-room with ourselves. The effects of this incident were not transient: from this hour miss Clarendon looked up to Emma as her model: no persuasions could induce her to leave Mrs. Sandford's house.

The ascendency which this sweet girl acquired was indeed surprising. The approbation of Emma Crosby was the recompense of every effort of self-command. She read in her modest and retiring eye the signal for wisdom and forbearance. The sound of Emma's voice modulated her rising notes of petulance, and her smile of approbation appeared necessary to her well-being. I was one day remarking these things

to

to her: "I do not," replied she, "wish to disown what you say. Emma Crosby is the object of my emulation. I love you, my dear Angelica; but with that sentiment I find mixed a reverence for Emma, which I cannot well explain. Do you know, she was perfectly acquainted with the circumstance mentioned by Mrs. Sandford relative to my grandfather? Do you not see with what encouraging gentleness she manages my headstrong temper? Has she not convinced me that the humble of heart are blessed?!"

When these young ladies quitted Mrs. Sandford, their friendship had taken that form which it will retain as long as they exist. Winford castle and Mr. Crosby's house had alternately their guests, until the marriage of miss Crosby took place. She has been many years the wife of a gentleman recommended to her favour by her mother's relations, who are proud of a woman that reflects honour on them. Mr. Crosby met with dignified good nature the overtures of reconciliation mady by his

wife's connexions; and, with a candidness which marks his character, observed, in reply to the concessions made him, "that he was an example of those evils so commonly attendant on youthful and indiscreet attachments, and which almost always lie concealed in unequal unions. I wanted not," added he, "either probity or affection, but I wanted that firmness of mind which ought to have left me no alternative in a decision, in which the honourableness of my own principles, and the delicacy and the reputation of the woman whom I loved, were so deeply implicated. I married her, and incurred the opprobrium which it cast on my name. But, inexperienced and guiltless as she was, she saw not the justice of this harsh opinion. She felt my injuries; and slowly, but, Heaven be praised! not repentantly, acknowledged that the woman, who, unmindful of her station in life, quits the rank allotted her for one very much beneath her, has no right to complain, if, on wishing to return to the post she has deserted, she finds no admittance. In becoming the husband

of

of the rich Emma Wentworth my character was open at least to suspicion. As the father and guardian of her child, it has, I trust, exhibited its native rectitude. The sorrows which have been left me with this precious deposit have silenced resentment. I meet with cordiality the hearts of those who are disposed to love and protect my child: to her I leave the enforcement of claims now so happily admitted: she will not disgrace her family."

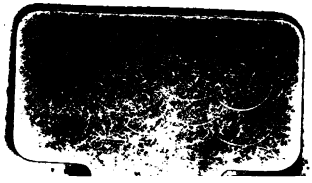
The amiable miss Crosby on her marriage went to Ireland. Her father has constantly resided with her. Mrs. Fermor, having no family to engage her time, visits her friend annually. She says that nothing can draw Emma from her father and nursery; and that, if I wish to see her, I must seek her in the midst of five rosy-faced boys and girls, in the apartment of her father, who is very infirm with the gout, but whose cheerfulness appears to increase in proportion with his rising comforts. His son-in-law is worthy of that title, and deserving of the wife which Heaven has bestowed on him.

Mrs.

Mrs. Fermor speaks in raptures of *a little Emma*, whom she calls her own: "For," said she archly, "although she has stolen the dove-like eyes of her mother, she has something of my former glorious spirit, and now rules her grandfather at her will; who, I fear, if he takes no care of what he is doing, will prepare her for those lessons to which I have been indebted for my comfort and happiness." My amiable Emma still remembers me, and frequently writes. She reproaches my indolence, and bids me make my peace by presenting you.

I trust I shall one day exultingly see her embrace the deserving object of my care, and receive from her those congratulations that will communicate the purest joy to the heart of your

ANGELICA PALMERSTONE.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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